The MODERN QUARTERLY

EDITED BY V. F. CALVERTON AND S. D. SCHMALHAUSEN

VOL. V No. 4

A Challenge to American Intellectuals

(A Controversy)

Lewis Mumford vs V. F. Calverton

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Marxism and the Modern World

(A Symposium)

CONTRIBUTORS: *John Dewey, Sidney Hook, Max Eastman, Arthur Calhoun, Louis Boudin, Waldo Frank, Henri De Mann, S. D. Schmalhausen*

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HERMAN G. WEINBERG, Mgr.

BRIEFER MENTIONS

A Voyage to the Island of Articoles. By André Maurois. Appleton.
New York. By Paul Morand. Flammarion.
Scenes de la Vie Future. By George Duhamel. Mercure de France.
Written on Water. By Francis de Miomandre. Brentano.
Enfants Terrible. By Jean Cocteau. Brewer & Warren.
The Family. By Francois Mauriac. Covici Friede.
The School for Wives. By André Gide. Alfred A. Knopf.
Last Nights of Paris. By Philippe Soupalt. Macaulay.
Wooden Swords. By Jacques Deval. Viking Press.

There are seldom published in the course of two years nine more distinguished or more diverse books than the nine listed above. Eight of them have this in common: they are unmistakably French. The ninth is by André Maurois, who, after paying England the compliment of glorifying her men of letters, has paid her the greater compliment of thinking like them.

Yet it is not of Shelley nor Byron nor Disraeli that one is reminded by *A Voyage to the Island of the Articoles,* but of David Garnett, the book's translator, whose *Man in the Zoo* contained the same unsentimental whimsicality, the same gentle satire. The Articoles are the artists of the world, a race apart, on whose island the author is shipwrecked and kept for analysis. It is, however, his analysis of them which is revealed to us and which, if made compulsory reading, might be the salvation of a great many young writers.

M. Maurois' only reference to a living writer is contained in a diary he keeps in imitation of the Articoles: "Either complete stillness or perpetual movement, Buddha or Paul Morand, these are the only paths to

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Table of Contents

THE PULSE OF MODERNITY (Editorials)		397
A CHALLENGE TO AMERICAN INTELLECTUALS (A Controversy)	*Lewis Mumford vs. V. F. Calverton*	407
MARXISM AND SOCIAL CHANGE (A Symposium)		
SOCIAL CHANGE AND ITS HUMAN DIRECTION	*John Dewey*	422
THE DOCTRINAL CRISIS IN SOCIALISM	*Max Eastman*	426
THE MEANING OF MARXISM	*Sidney Hook*	430
THE DOCTRINAL CRISIS IN EASTMANISM	*Arthur Calhoun*	436
MARX AND HIS REVISERS	*Louis Boudin*	439
SOCIALISM AND VALUE	*Waldo Frank*	448
SOCIALISM AND SCIENCE	*Henri de Mann*	451
THE LOGIC OF LENINISM	*S. D. Schmalhausen*	454
IOAN NADEJDE	*B. Liber*	467
SOMEWHERE THIS (A Poem)	*Eli Siegel*	483
D. H. LAWRENCE	*Herbert Schwartz*	485
THE WESTERN DANCE OF DEATH	*Carl E. Gehring*	492
NON-SENSE OF THE WHOLE (A Controversy)	*Sidney Hook vs. Waldo Frank*	504
THE MONETARY CONTROL OF LITERATURE	*Oakley Johnson*	517
ALFRED ADLER, PANACEA-IST	*Wilhelm Stekel*	524
ON A BABY BORN DEAD	*Louis Ginsberg*	527
FALL OF A FAIR CONFEDERATE	*Anonymous*	528
A DECADE OF WORLD CINEMA	*Herman Weinberg*	537
THE THEATRE		542
BOOK REVIEWS—		545

By *Gamaliel Bradford, Alan Calmer, Huntly Carter, Barrett Clark, John Chamberlain, Floyd Dell, Charles Yale Harrison, Alexander Kaun, Joshua Kunitz, Harry Potamkin, S. D. Schmalhausen, George Schuyler, Bernard Smith.*

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happiness." In the course of his perpetual movement, M. Morand has lately arrived in New York. As a result we have a guide-book which combines the qualities of littérateur, gourmet and statistician. New York, we learn, swallowed eight million eggs a day; in the Pierpont Morgan Library is the manuscript of *Eugénie Grandet* marginated with the various Balzac manias: additions, subtractions, plans for his new house, and even the marks of his coffee cup; one lunches in department stores, museums, drug-stores, and in the most unexpected places; Einstein calls New York a city of two dimensions; and, what if it is only a dream, a prodigious attempt, an avatar, an ephemeral renaissance, a magnificent purgatory?

It hardly seems right to be reminded of O. O. McIntyre and yet . . .

Another book about America is *Scènes de la Vie Future*. There seems to be no doubt in the mind of M. Duhamel that it is a magnificent purgatory which will shortly swallow up the culture of Europe. An illuminating book, stimulating as only dogmatism can be.

M. Moran in his book gave a paragraph to Balzac; M. de Miomandre has done more: he has reincarnated Balzac in the person of M. de Meillan, the father of the young hero of *Written on Water*. His projects number among them a denatured alcohol mine, artificial marble, a mineral spring for diabetics and a coal mine under Carthage. He is magnificent and pathetic; he carves anchovy-buttered horse-steaks with an Inca dagger, is imposed on by an earthworm salesman, and refuses five francs to his own son. Yet *Written on Water* is not primarily the story of M. de Meillan; it belongs rather to two children, the one betrayed by his father, the other by her mother, who find solace in each other. The book has no counterpart in American or English fiction; it is enormously fantastic and at the same time emotionally real.

The two children of M. Cocteau's *Enfants Terribles* are sister and brother living in a confused world of their own; it is the invasion of this world by normal beings which leads to tragedy; these normal beings who attract the brother are invariably of one type. M. Cocteau explains:

> "Yet, the influence which, without his knowing it, that type exerted over him, and that which he, Paul, exerted over his sister, intersected the confusion of their lives in the form of implacable straight lines, headed one toward the other, like that pair of adverse lines which, rising from the base, meet at the top of a Greek pediment."

It is not the overwriting that gives this book its strangely depraved air; it is not the melodramatic explanatio of trivialities; it is rather the author' hysteria which leaves the reader faintly sick and which may be by some mistaken for cleverness.

Two books which by reason of their calm contrast strongly with *Enfants Terribles* are *The Family* by M. Mauriac and *The School for Wives* by André Gide. In them life is slowed down, tragedy feeds on inertia and boredom is translated into emotion. The two stories in *The Family*, "The Kiss to the Leper" and "Genetrix," have to do with the same family, natives of the Gironde, a country of pines and marshes. The harmony of locale, character, and style is as substantial and theatrical as the harmony of a Gordon Craig setting for *King Lear*.

Though the title of *The School for Wives* is taken from Moliére, the character of Eveline Delaborde, whose diary the book is, is Racinean in devotion, frankness and nobility. Her tragedy is the tragedy of disillusionment.

In passing from M. Gide's book to *Last Nights of Paris* by Philippe Soupault, one passes from sheer character study to a book in which characters are only means for exploiting an amusing imagination and a great love for Paris. It is a book which one is tempted to classify negatively as not character-study, not comedy, not satire nor tragedy. Yet, that is obviously unfair to it. Taken positively, it is the melodrama of a poet, modern, sophisticated and entertaining.

Thus, by way of melodrama do we arrive at comedy, the most ironic, the most delicious and genuine comedy yet written on the war theme. For the keynote to *Wooden Swords* we must turn to the last few lines of the book:

> "Let nothing come to kill, crush or rend; let there be a happy ending for this poor devil in the S. O. S., as for Charlie Chaplin, when, at the end of his misadventures, he dwindles into the distance, like myself, with wavering steps, his shoulders hunched, his head down, and his little cane twirling."

The French have idolized "Charlot," but it is M. Deval who has finally parallelled him in fiction, thereby creating a war novel, which puts to shame the bulk of books, both comic and tragic, written on that theme.

M. Maurois, with whom this review opens, and M. Deval, with whom it closes, have this in common: they are worthy exponents of Meredith's statement, "Comedy is the fountain of sound sense."

BABETTE HUGHES.

Roadside Meetings. Hamlin Garland. Macmillan Co. $3.50.

It is a book like this which makes us appreciate what has happened in American literature in the last few generations. The career of Hamlin

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Garland himself is typical of that change. Beginning as a young man, he tells us in the early pages of this book, with radical interests and a crusading zeal, anxious to bring literature close to life and smell of the very soil from which it is born, he ends up in his old age as a conservative thinker and a literary die-hard.

Garland is no longer a vital part of the American literary scene. He has lived to see his influence vanish and the part that he played in our literary life diminish into a recollection.

It is just because all this has happened to our life and literature that *Roadside Meetings* is full of so much nostalgia for the past.

Sweetness aplenty, yes, and an affection for what Howells called "the more smiling aspects of life which are the more American," but nothing of the bitterness of those days, a bitterness felt by many, not by the few. A phrase here and there, it is true, about the horror of poverty in the midst of so much wealth, and avowed interest in single tax as a panacea, and a verbal hope for a better future—nice words, yes, but with no fight in them.

Generals Die in Bed. Charles Yale Harrison. William Morrow. $2.50

There is no more sincere indictment of war than is to be found in this book. Lacking something of the power of Barbusse's *Under Fire* and Latzko's *Men in War,* it ranks close to them through the sheer primitive intimacy of its description. Among all the war novels that have been written in America, only two others can be compared with it: John Dos Passos' *Three Soldiers* and E. E. Cummings' *Enormous Room.*

Morgan the Magnificent. John Winkler. Vanguard Press. $3.50.

A vivid picture of the American Mussolini, lacking in radical insight and interpretation.

European Literature. Janko Lavrin. Richard R. Smith. $3.00

Fine critical essays in literary method. The chapter on Romanticism is excellent.

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A Soviet novel in the ultra-modern style. Brilliant characterizations, effected with cinematographic intensity and thrill.

I Thought of Daisy. Edmund Wilson. Scribner's.
Poet's Farewell. Edmund Wilson. Scribner's.

A first novel and a first (and last) book of verse by the best liberal American literary critic writing today. Mr. Wilson unquestionably knows *how* to write, but has never found anything in life sufficiently gripping to direct his work. All of the characters in Mr. Wilson's novel represent certain prominent literary and philosophical figures of his intimate acquaintance. One of these is John Dos Passos, who has written in:

Forty Second Parallel. John Dos Passos. Harper's.

the first of a trilogy of novels concerned with present-day America. Here is no narrow provincialism characteristic of most of our literature. The title of this novel bears comparison with the title of Michael Gold's volume of stories, *120 Million,* both of which represent the attempt to embody all of America in a complete entity. Dos Passos is the most important American man of letters connected with the radical movement, and is also our most important living novelist.

Selected Poems of Conrad Aiken. Scribner's. $3.00.

The Pulitzer Prize, this volume of selected verse, and Mr. Aiken's escape to Europe have focused the attention of the literary world upon his writings, with the result that most critics have pronounced his literary demise. Mere facility at phrase-making is not enough for the creation of lasting art; yet Mr. Aiken has succeeded in producing a few poems (*Priapus and the Pool, Senlin*) to be added to the body of enduring literature.

Humanism and America. Edited by Norman Foerster. Farrar & Rinehart.

The Humanists *en masse*, led by Mr. Babbitt's lieutenant, attack and condemn our entire modern civilization. This volume provoked a wide-sweeping counter-attack culminating in:

The Critique of Humanism. Edited by C. Hartley Grattan. Brewer & Warren.

which furnishes indisputable evidence of a sterility of ideas among our men of letters and of their utter incapacity to deal with problems that involve more than literature.

The American Scholar Norman Foerster. Univ. of N. C. Press.

A large portion of this essay appeared in the *Hound & Horn* under the title of "Historian and Critic of Letters." Borrowing his title from Emerson, Mr. Foerster blames the state of scholarship at the present time to the two phobias of Humanism: science and romanticism. The first is responsible for the creation of the science of philology and for the creation of a literary branch of historical science. The second has caused the professional critic to fall into impressionism.

CORRESPONDENCE

DEAR CALVERTON:

In general, I agree with Max Eastman's protest against the fatalism of Marx's inverted Hegelianism. I do not agree that "the mind is a mere practical apparatus for attaining ends determined by the instructive impulses." For one thing, too many words in that statement need defining.

I agree that the philosophy of dialectic materialism is "disguised religion." The psychological resemblances between Communism and religion are indeed so great as scarcely to be disguised. Which makes me wonder whether its prophet, Lenin's mind was essentially scientific despite his genius for a ruthless realism and the large element in him of the creative will. These things are not uncommon in great leaders of religious movements.

Max Eastman, I suspect, would agree with me that there is much to be said for Marxism in its historical rôle and as a "definition of fact"—to use his own phrase—which he has not had space to say in the limits of this article.

Finally, I agree with Max Eastman that Marxism cries out for "revolutionary" rather than "counter-revolutionary" revision, but I am fairly certain we should differ considerably in our definition of these terms. And there's the nub of the problem.

NORMAN THOMAS.

DEAR V. F.:

What a task you would lay on the shoulders of a man in the midst of writing a book: an ill man, too, directed by his physician to desist from labor and change the scene and watch his diet: in short, me! It would be bad enough if I had only to express my attitude towards Marx: but I differ from Eastman as violently as I do from Marx, who, after all, I respect and value as a great myth-maker: and that would make the task doubly difficult. The thing that Eastman doesn't recognize is that Marx—contrary to all his solemn protestations and beliefs—was a utopian: and *therein lay his strength*. As for Eastman, he is badly muddled. What creates or at all events formulates the "goal of desire," which he acknowledges? Surely not science but philosophy. And who puts this goal of desire before society? Not the engineer, but the prophet, whether as philosopher, as poet, as artist. The notion that the scientists and the engineer are capable of

formulating a new order of society is fantastic. Even our bourgeoisie has always known better than that: hence the rôle of its prophets from Defoe down to Lord Melchett's devoted admirer, Mr. Wells. I wish I had the energy to elaborate all this for you: but I must ruthlessly say No.

LEWIS MUMFORD.

❖❖❖❖❖

DEAR MR. CALVERTON:

I recently came upon a copy of THE MODERN QUARTERLY. I had heard of but had not seen it. Forthwith bought it because it had an article in it about white women and black men by Schuyler. Then in the back I found your sarcastic and amusing letter to Miss Allison.

Frankly, how do you get by with this in *Baltimore?*

Mr. Calverton, I am a white woman married to a dark man. I am not a scrub nor of low morals. I come from one of the best families in the good, old New England States, have had more than the average opportunities in educational and cultural ways, and my first husband was a prominent doctor and politician in his State. I merely show you that I am not a mental or moral moron.

My Dark Lover is out of one of the best old families in the South (by way of the back door) and was with the A. E. F. in France. He looks a great deal like that charming boy, Philip Randolph, only lighter in weight. My friends here in Hollywood are writers and artists and they take him as a matter of course. Last April, I had an article in *The Crisis*. I swore that this article would smoke out many other white women who had Dark Lovers. It did. I received many letters from East, South, West, North, of women thanking me for having written that article. So, *you see*, when I see white men of intelligence and power like you defending the colored race it makes me very happy. They are part of us, *Americans*, keenly alive to their country and wishing if they had half a chance to be good citizens. They are *not* vicious and brutal. They are, as a race, gentle and refined.

My Dark Lover has been subjected to every ignominy that it is possible for a man to feel, because of his skin, and yet I swear to you right now he is more evolved, more compassionate and understanding than any white person I know. He is disciplined. He has had to carve his way with his bare hands and he can do anything. Moreover, he is really an artist and has all an artist's reactions to life. Between us, I think that the day is not far off when white women will pick dark men for their charm, their virility, and because, having subjugated their own men, they now despise them. As a lover, the average white man in America makes a good cash register. John says we think about love, talk about love, but never *do* anything. He says we are too cerebral in all our acitons. Living with him is a liberal education in so many things that I could write a book about it. Indeed, I would if I felt it would ever get into print.

How would you like an article on how the dark soldier was treated in France? I will be able to furnish you with some good stuff. As for John, he is consumed with a sort of weary indifference. Always his face shows a veiled contempt, like a curtain drawn between himself and the world. And yet he suffers! Such terrible unjust and contemptible meanness! I almost hate my race for its lack of decent manners. I know all of the cast of "Hallelujah," and one night at a party at the Dunbar Hotel in the colored district where I met the whole cast, the sweet kid who does the dancing and is known as Blue Boy, came over to where I sat talking to Randolph, and said:

"Are you having a good time? I hope so, because I want you to."

That from a so-called inferior race whose people have been insulted daily by our superior race! Where lies the superiority?

I love colored parties. They have much more social ease than we and they treat one cordially. But there is always that little constraint. They have to be *sure*, and some of them hate us cordially.

There is much sex-relationship going on *sub rosa*. The only reason there isn't more is because women fear to cause suffering to their dark men. I hope this doesn't shock you. Once you love a dark man, you'll never return. Anyhow, they are mostly white men with colored blood, and many of them have the best blood of our country in their veins, blood that has died out but for them. The manners and deportment of the average well-behaved colored person are above those of the average whites and *I know it.*

RHEBE CAIN.

Volume 5 Number 4

The Modern Quarterly

DEMOCRACY VERSUS DICTATORSHIP

THE German elections foreshadow developments in economic and political tendency that mark the beginning of a new epoch in European affairs. They sound the early death-knell of democracy and the rising triumph of dictatorship. The growth of the Fascists and the Communists at the expense of the Social-Democrats and other gorups is but a political reflection of what is already a deep-rooted, ineradicable economic tendency. The modern world, despite the protestations of its *liberal* spokesmen, is fast ridding itself of every vestige of democracy. Not only is Germany getting ready to abandon it, but the other countries of Europe are making obvious preparations to follow. What remains of democracy today in Europe—or in America—is scarcely more than an empty fiction.

Just as the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries are generally looked upon as representing an era of monarchies, even though democracy had already begun to show its head in France as well as England; and the nineteenth century is loosely described as representing an era of democracy; so the twentieth century will be viewed by the future historian as representing an era of dictatorships. Dictatorship will be considered then as having been an inevitable expression of twentieth century industrial and social life—and democracy recognized as having been the political symbol of that age when modern individualism arose out of the disintegration of feudal life and the early development of machine production. The period through which we are now passing will be seen as a transitionary one, marking off the death-struggle of the democratic tradition.

Now let us see what the forces and factors are in the twentieth century

world that will make this so—that already have largely made it so. In the first place, let us examine the causal factors and then the evidential ones. The democratic idea, in its modern form, has had a very obvious derivation. Democracy in Greece, contrary to the apostrophes of its enthusiasts, was never democracy at all. Based upon slavery, and in Athens, for example, upon certain citizenship qualifications which excluded the larger part of its population from the right to vote, democracy never found real root in Greek soil. It was in revolt against the feudal world, and in response to the demands of the commercial and industrial revolutions, that democracy arose as a concept and a practice. Democracy developed as the political weapon of the middle class, necessary to the attainment of its economic ends. In line with middle-class logic, it became an embodiment of the individualistic spirit of the time which grew out of the rise of commerce and industry—the twin pursuits of the *bourgeoisie*. Its economic program found embodiment in the doctrine of *laissez-faire* which soon came to dominate the spirit of its entire tradition: political, juridical, and educational as well as economic. Its defense of competition, in direct defiance of feudal tradition, was extended into every field of activity. The parliamentary principle, amplified to include enough representatives of the middle class to assure their mastery of control, became its form of expression in the field of politics. Individualism, with its emphasis upon private property and the supreme right of the individual as against the state, became its cardinal philosophy of life.

So much for the causal factors. Now let us note what has happened to them in this century. To begin with, the middle class no longer needs democracy as its political weapon. No landed aristocracy exists to challenge its ascendancy. Its control of economic power is maintained today despite rather than because of democracy. Moreover, the rise of the fourth estate, the proletariat, becomes in itself more of a threat because of the existence of the democratic heritage. By the sheer logic of numbers, which constitutes the basis of democratic doctrine, the proletariat, if united, can outvote the middle class and seize control of power. As a consequence, the middle class in the last few decades has been forced to use every device in order to defeat the inevitable direction of democratic tendency; in other words, while paying verbal homage to democracy, it has done everything possible to prevent democracy from going into actual effect. The party system in the United States in particular has been exploited to the utmost to thwart any advance on the side of the proletariat; the costs of campaigns, the control of elections, have all been so devised and manipulated that proletarian possibilities, even if conscious, could never be realized by means of the prevailing democratic method. The very evolution of democracy thus in every modern state has been definitely in the direction of concealed dictatorship. The concealment is only discarded when the proletariat by means of votes and rising economic power actually threatens the hegemony of the middle class—as happened in Italy, Poland, Spain, Hungary, Finland, and is beginning to happen in Germany today and the rest of Europe. It is at such times that even the lip-service to democracy must be forsaken, and dictatorship be undertaken in dead earnest. The proletariat is naturally driven in

the same direction, by force rather than by choice, and thus the modern state represents a definite conflict in kinds of dictatorship: Fascist or Communist. Democracy in this age is too weak to withstand either control.

In the second place, its economic basis—or the theory which gave it basis—*laissez faire,* is bankrupt. With the coming of mass production, corporate controls, trustified organization, and international cartels, the competitive theory of *laissez-faire* has lost its meaning and pertinence to this age. It belongs now, as the liberal economist, Maynard Keynes, has pointed out, among the economic relics. Modern business and industry could not function if the principle of *laissez-faire* continued to operate. And, in the third place, with the death of *laissez-faire* in the economic world has come the destruction of that individualism and that individualistic spirit which had grown up with the breakdown of feudalism and the rise of modern capitalism. We are already faced with a world today in which mass controls and mechanized endeavor have replaced individual controls and individualistic endeavor. The realization of this change has become apparent on every side, and with the development after the war of what has been called the Second Industrial Revolution, namely, the Technological Revolution, there are few important social thinkers who would deny the fact. John Dewey, for example, in a series of articles in *The New Republic* several months ago, was primarily concerned with the fate of the individual, and the possibilities of his adjustment, in a world of corporate or collective economy. Over a year before, Charles Wood in *The Myth of the Individual* anticipated what Dewey discussed. Today the concern is imminent everywhere in our civilization.

Along with this fundamental disintegration of the democratic tradition have developed other evidences of decay that are scarcely less ominous. The obvious breakdown of middle-class morality, for example, is a clear indication of the far-reaching character of the approaching débacle. The equally obvious conflict between politics and economics, the political element, in its parliamentary form, still trying to represent, however ineffectively and deceptively, the democratic idea, and the economic, in its industrial and financial form, representing the inevitable trend toward dictatorship, as instanced by the one Big Bank project, the international cartels and the like—it is this conflict which has revealed the inability of democracy to meet the exigencies of the present age. Only a dictatorship can so integrate the political and economic factors, and effect the centralization of control, which are necessary to the maintenance of modern industrial life. The very law of efficiency works in the direction of such control. While perfect efficiency of this kind could best be achieved by the management of technologists, social controls being as they are the best that can be done is what is being done in both Soviet Russia and Italy today, where technologists are employed by the state to carry out the plans of organization. Moreover, the fact that technologists as a whole are economically disorganized and lacking in social vision, and are more interested in mechanistic efficiency than in human values, makes them unable to execute the task of social reorganization. The technological efficiency demanded by modern industry can never be adequately attained under democratic controls, where, de-

spite the centralization of certain main industries, industry as a whole is not organized as a social unit.

The contempt for democracy which has grown up among a number of liberal thinkers in the last generation is but part of the reflection of the underlying decay of democratic institutions. While the nineteenth century was filled with men who pinned their entire faith in the future upon the success of democracy as a political and social reality, the twentieth century finds that faith gone. Bernard Shaw, Lloyd George, and Winston Churchill, types diverse enough in general tendency, and yet formerly united in one idea, that of belief in parliamentary democracy, have all come out in recent months with definite statements to the effect that democracy today is an outworn institution which cannot function in the crises that now confront the modern state. The same sentiment is expressed by leaders in every European country today. In addition to such attitudes on the part of men who are concerned with political facts, there is also the attitude of such intellectual types as Julian Benda, Clive Bell, and Henry L. Mencken, who are contemptuous of democracy not because it is an outmoded machine of government, but because it has allowed the masses to undermine the position of the "civilized minority." These men, all in all, are intellectual Fascists who have nothing but contempt for the masses. The whole sentiment which they voice has found indirect expression in the attitudes of the race fiends, the eugenists, the intelligence testers. But these are but superficial manifestations of the more basic change which we have already noted.

Political democracy can only work in an individualistic society where concerted social endeavor is unnecessary. Wherever mass production occurs and the function of the industrial *entrepreneur* is eclipsed, and the workers are reduced to robots, the principle of democracy, with its promise of individual rights and freedoms, becomes an anachronism. The struggle is at once changed under such conditions from one between individuals to one between groups. And the struggle between groups, or classes, is a struggle that can only result in dictatorship. Class struggle can never be solved by the democratic method.

It is a well-known fact that democracy can never function during times of crisis. The last war proved that beyond question. Ever since that war every country, with the possible exception of America, has been in a state of war within itself. Classes have not only been in open conflict with each other, but at times they have seriously threatened and in others actually overthrown the ruling class of the moment. The rise of Soviet dictatorships in Hungary, Esthonia, Latvia, and Lithuania, were an early evidence of that fact. The Fascist dictatorship in Italy arose at the time when the Socialists and Communists were almost at the point of seizing control. The dictatorship in Poland did not have a very dissimilar origin. The recent dictatorship in Hungary grew out of the overthrow of the Communist dictatorship which preceded it. The approaching dictatorship in Finland today is but another illustration of this same thesis. Germany, as we pointed out before, is moving rapidly in the same direction. England, with its present difficulties about its empire, will be forced into the same corner within the next few years—as we noted before, the intellectuals, the Bernard

Shaws, the Lloyd-Georges, the Winston Churchills, are preparing the mind of the people for it. Already dictatorial methods are being employed everywhere by democracies—in direct repudiation of democratic institutions—in their fight for survival. No better example of this is to be found than in the present treatment of India by the British Labor Government. A greater and more overt travesty of democratic rule has never before been perpetrated. The same vicious methods are being openly employed in Finland today. And even in the United States, where the threat at supremacy is still remote, the successive arrests and convictions of Communists are an evidence of the presence of the same tendency.

The sentimental sacredness which has grown up about the concept of democracy in the last century or more has been of a middle-class origin. This is a fact which is too seldom realized. The thinkers who have made democracy into the holy ultimate of political progress have been, in the main, men with middle-class ideals. The numerous avenues of disseminating opinion open to the middle class have made it possible for its thinkers to drill the democratic ideal onto the whole social consciousness of the modern state. If the proletariat in the past absorbed this idea, it did not profit greatly by it. Political democracy has been so organized that in practice it keeps the proletariat from ever acquiring any power, while in theory it endows it with the possibility of acquiring all power. It is this deception which has been so vicious. It has deceived radicals—as well as the populace. The Socialist Party in the United States today, and the Social-Democratic organizations in other parts of the world, continue to cling to that deception. Therein lies their essential weakness, for in holding on to a middle-class device they only defeat their avowed proletarian end—and become, as they have become in most countries already, defenders of middle-class institutions.

What has to be learned—and what the Communists and the Fascists have both learned—is that democracy in the modern industrial world may still function within the class but not between classes. Democracy may function within a union, or unions, for example, if a common proletarian purpose prevails within it or them; but a democratic relationship cannot exist between the union and the employer—except where the union is an agent of the employer, as is the case with the A. F. of L. today. Wherever the union is radical, on the other hand, the relationship between it and the employer inevitably takes on a dictatorial character. Either the employer dictates to the union or the union to the employer. Again, democracy may exist within a radical party, say the Communists, but it cannot exist between a radical party and a reactionary. The very attempt at democratic relationships between economic classes today invariably results in chaos and stagnation—and concealed dictatorship. If democracy has any future whatsoever, in providing actual equality for all, it would only be in a society in which classes were abolished, and the whole of society worked as one group-unit. To get that one group-unit, however, necessitates dictatorship in the present organization of society.

To summarize, then, it is the very structure of modern society, with its disorganized production and division of classes, that makes dictatorship inevitable as the next step in the historic process. The dictatorships can

take on one of two characters: Communist or Fascist—oppose private property and establish the dictatorship of the proletariat, or defend private property, and establish the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. In either case industry can be organized into a scientific unit, the present dissipation of economic energy be saved, and the friction of democratic struggle be destroyed. Modern nations must be organized upon a basis of efficiency in order to survive at all. Productive units must be subject to social control. The whole structure of industry today demands that. The whole advance in technology necessitates it. There is no other turning that is possible in the present stage of affairs.

The next decade, therefore, will be confronted with the struggle of dictatorships and not democracies. That the word democracy may be retained even after its form has vanished is very likely, but even the word will become meaningless in the face of denying fact. Fascist dictatorships will result in industrial feudalism, with the ever increasing subordination of the proletariat; Communist dictatorships will result in collectivist economies, based upon the control of the proletariat.

For those who believe in the masses there is but one choice. For those who do not, there is but one other. There is no in-between path that can be taken. The course of the liberal is as inevitably fascistic as that of the conservative. His fate, in other countries, is just as surely sealed as that of the liberals in Soviet Russia, Italy, Spain, Finland, and Germany. His economic alliance with the middle class drives him in the direction of Fascism at the very time when his defense of liberalism is most eloquent. It is this very gesture which is most dangerous. It too often gives him the opportunity of playing the part of a false leader. But such leadership cannot long avail in the struggle that is ahead. It is upon those Communists who see the struggle, and prepare themselves to meet it, that the leadership must fall.

THE evil alliance of science and capitalism is the newest source of our disillusion with the rôle of "superior brains" in civilization.

Since under every social system, men of ability tend to pool their interests, economic and intellectual, with the powers that be, we have as perfect a demonstration as history shall ever afford us of the ineradicable treason of the intellectuals: treason to those theories and ideals which if sincerely applied to the general welfare would liberate the masses from bondage to the exploiter. The intellectuals have played a shameful rôle in every great social crisis in the history of human emancipation. They provide the theories of emancipation and then obstruct liberation in reality.

From a purely theoretical point of view, science is the key to whatever is socially significant in contemporary civilization. If scientists as a class were not tied hand and foot by the capitalistic psychology of values, there would be some sense in the hope that the gathered and concentrated expert intelligence of these intellectuals could produce all the revolutions that the earth can bear, looking to the emancipation of humanity from superstition and exploitation and class logic.

The liberals and the socialists still occupy the untenable position of believing in the unbiased nature of intelligence, in the creative possibilities of general enlightenment (and liberation) under scientific auspices. The

assumption that knowledge can be humanized and used for pragmatic emancipations within the framework of a capitalism increasingly amenable to the persuasions of scientific technique and social reformism is a blunder in imagination, a defect in realistic analysis, that mars all the thinking that is being done these days among the instrumental-minded intellectuals.

Only now do we begin to perceive with a sharpened clarity to what abuses science is exposed, while it remains passively subservient to the money-kings, the vested interests that control with an iron hand the range of subject matter and of permissible originality which institutions of learning (in a democracy!) may enjoy.

The thinking process is by its very nature radical—probing phenomena to their roots—and atheistical and transformative. Hence the insidious caution of the ruling powers that these discoveries and revolutionary insights of science be published and applied only to those aspects of the *status quo* that can extract a profiteer's increment from the further extension of science. The scientists are forbidden to be as radical and intellectually honest in relation to the underlying realities, including the disingenuous ideology by endless repetition of which the exploitative groups manage to survive and prosper. Thought, originality, discovery, must function within the limiting molds of capitalistic motivation. It is quite impossible under these handicapping and perverting circumstances for intellectuals to utter their convictions, or for that matter to build up convictions to utter.

What alternative is there? Though any critical-minded person who is more interested in details and minor defects than in large aspects and far-reaching implications can point out some very significant inadequacies in the philosophy of Communism, the inspiring fact remains that Communistic Culture is the one road that promises to lead both to a maximum knowledge of reality as conceived by the scientific mind and to the maximum humanization of life as concieved by the social philosopher.

In economics, Communism spells the extirpation of the profit motive. If Communism offered nothing else to an imperialistically subjugated mankind, pitted in recurrent cycles of exploitation and panic against the pecuniary vandalism of a handful of strategically situated manipulators of the *status quo,* with desperate war and desperate preparation for war as the inevitable accompaniment of the manic-depressive curve in capitalistic economy, every victim of so hideous a social system should be on the side of Communism.

But Communism is not only the first sane solution of the economic problem, it is also the first sane solution of the psychological problem. If the emerging sciences of psychology and psychiatry have one lesson to teach us, it is the infinite wreckage of life, individual and social, wrought by the dominance of egotism in the affairs of men.

Laissez faire, competition, individual pursuit of profit and prestige, the practical philosophy of devil-take-the-hindmost, the business man's emphasis on individual success (and to hell with humanity), the fierce rivalry of persons and groups not only in the industrial world but also in the more intangible centers of learning, the rationalization of individual egotism in the form of the salvation of the soul, intellectual gospels of native talent

and the survival of the most competent, the uncritical spread of educational theories that cater to the egotistic and self-centered propensities of privileged go-getters, the cult of intelligence-testing — all these disintegrating and degrading by-products of the egotistic attitude toward life will only be nullified and totally eliminated from the consciousness of the race when a healing communization of productive process, affecting the educational process in every vital particular, will have for the first time in civilized history made possible the socialization of the ego-impulses, the genuine humanization of personality.

If our teachers could summon just that minimum of courage and clarity (which is so essential to confronting life realistically) to realize the sheer monstrous waste of precious ability and even more precious life which a competitive system thrives by and which a coöperative system decently transcends, more of our pedagogues of high and low degree would move at least a few faltering steps in the direction of the one really human philosophy in the modern world, the philosophy of Communism.

Thus we have two new arguments in behalf of cultural Communism: (1) that science can neither be adequately honest nor adequately humane unless it breaks its evil alliance with capitalism and joins loyally with the forces and values of Communism; (2) that human nature cannot develop its total capacity for humanness under a competitive system that could not survive for a day unless it pitted nation versus nation, color versus color, class versus class, individual versus individual: the ultimate result being the murderous destruction of everything excellent in civilization, of everything fine in humanity.

Human nature will begin to expand humanely, in comradely extensive fellowships, subordinating narcissistic and egotistic inclinations (the source of the infinite disharmony and envy and hate and inferiority that wound and mutilate human nature irremediably, under the present frustrating and repressing system of life) to deep-hearted and sincere-minded humanism, under the inspiration of Communist culture.

Men have attempted to live by delusion and evasion. Theology came into existence promising to still the pangs of mortality by offering the solace of an unimaginable immortality. But the pangs have never been stilled. The masses ask for bread, religion gives them a stone: poignantly enough, the stone gives a false sense of satiety and the masses remain for incredible centuries precariously quiescent. But the gifts which the church brings are no longer trusted even by the faithful. The infinite corruption and dishonesty and parasitism that constitute the power and glory of the church have at long last produced their disillusioning effect upon the multitude. The masses still attend church, but they do not believe in religion.

Metaphysics, with one arm rather too lovingly around the fat neck of theology, has in many subtle propositions attempted to persuade the mortal mind to give up its small-visioned pursuit of material and most earthly things, and to concentrate its unblest desires upon intangible blessings, such as love of epistomology, faith in truth, quest of knowledge, acceptance of life as a brief doom hardly worthy of the fuss bestowed upon it by unphilosophical humans. The thinkers who expounded this meta-physical philosophy of values were in every case persons who had a reasonable economic security, privileged status socially and intellectually, more than a modicum

of the good things of life (material and spiritual)! The disingenuousness of the metaphysicians is by now pretty clear to every student of the history of thought. While the masses writhed in servitude, metaphysicians were concocting arguments to prove that man is endowed with free will. And of what importance are the masses, anyhow—if "sweetness and light" reside only in a few superior minds?

Science, fortunately, though it takes its origin in non-proletarian minds and outlooks, is in method and humbleness and loyalty to brute fact, very close to that logic of reality which toilers find congenial, once they have rid their minds of the spooks of theology and cleansed their minds of the cobwebs of metaphysics.

Science, if it were wholly honest, would be on the side of the proletariat, since that is the only social group fundamentally and most basically concerned with the earth and its tangible resources and potentialities. Science must not only deny the fantastic claims of theology to a special kind of truth, but must equally ignore the arrogant claims of metaphysics to a special kind of wisdom.

What science needs for its most fruitful development is a straightforward and loving alliance with humanity as represented at the humble level of proletarianism. No wonder an increasing number of brilliant engineers and scientists and educators (with a realistic outlook on life) are enthusiastic about Soviet Russia—the one land in the whole world that is attempting to apply science to every department of human activity, thus presenting us with the inspiring picture of a population beautifully dedicated to a logic of reality uncontaminated by theological hocus-pocus and metaphysical moonshine.

Communism is not only a theory of economics; it is primarily a philosophy of culture. Only with the advent and general spread of Communistic Culture can science genuinely take charge of the world's affairs, having as its true goal the welfare of humanity. For the first time in the history of life, the mind and heart of the race meet and embrace sincerely, affectionately, in comradely fellowship. For the first time in the history of civilization, the egocentric impulses in human nature are under the control of a humanistic psychology of behavior.

America more than any other country on the face of the globe needs another American Revolution to cleanse its capitalistic Augean Stables of the political corruption and economic brigandage and theological thuggery and legal dishonesty and educational servility and spiritual flabbiness that constitute These States a bourgeois paradise for subtle swindlers and religious quacks and oratorical go-getters.

Why not dedicate Columbus Day to special prayers in all the churches and synagogues—for a Communist Revolution—so that the American Revolution (1776) may not remain a mockery in the world's memory?

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THE symposium on Social Change and Marxism which appears in this issue has been run in order to keep our readers informed as to the various attitudes towards Marxism which have developed since the War. *Monde* ran a symposium somewhat similar to this some time ago. The attitudes represented there were primarily European. In this symposium, however, we have been more interested in the nature of the American reaction. The articles of John Dewey, Louis Boudin, Waldo

Frank, Max Eastman, Arthur Calhoun, Samuel Schmalhausen, and Sydney Hook indicate very clearly the attitude of the American intellectuals towards Marxism as a social theory—and a revolutionary weapon. The letters of Lewis Mumford and Norman Thomas in reference to this symposium, which are quoted in the correspondence columns, are also of interest in this connection. The article of Henri de Man is included in order to show something of the swing against Marxism that has occurred among certain of the old Marxians. It reflects the bankrupt faith of many former Marxians whose revolutionary conviction was shot to pieces by the War. De Man has already become a force among the Revisionists—hence we have printed his article so that our readers can see something of the sick drift of his argument. Unfortunately, several Communists who were asked to contribute failed to do so, and thus a certain angle of the controversy was lost. The Communists' attitude, however, is represented in several articles so that it should not be thought that left-wing analysis has been omitted. If anything, the articles harbinger an increased interest in Marxism on the part of American intellectuals in the next decade. The very fact that such left-wing writers as Michael Gold, John Dos Passos, Louis Lozowick, Joshua Kunitz, Sydney Hook, Harry Potamkin, Scott Nearing, and Bernard Smith have been making such marked headway in American literature and social thought today is but additional evidence of the growing strength of left-wing sentiment among American Intellectuals. The preponderant influence of economics upon all social life in this age will unquestionably make Marxism into an intellectual force in America in the near future. At that time a symposium like this would undoubtedly take on almost entirely a revolutionary cast. The present symposium reflects the chaos and indecision which exists today even among our social-minded intellectuals.

A CHALLENGE TO AMERICAN INTELLECTUALS

A CONTROVERSY

THE EVOLUTIONARY APPROACH

BY LEWIS MUMFORD

IN an article on *Revolt Among American Intellectuals* in the *New Masses,* published now over a year ago,* Mr. V. F. Calverton gave us all a very proper lacing; and since I had long been waiting for someone to raise the very issues he put forward so clearly, I wrote a brief reply, in the hope of bringing various important issues into even clearer definition. The editors of the *New Masses,* for reasons they were far too gentlemanly ever to disclose to me in so many cold words, declined to publish my reply; so I am grateful for the opportunity Mr. Calverton has given me to re-state my position in THE MODERN QUARTERLY.

The essence of Mr. Calverton's contention is that the revolt of the American intellectual against the sordid society that surrounds him never becomes revolutionary. In the writer's isolation, he usually shrinks into mysticism, or some form of intellectual retirement, if he does not actually become absorbed, intellectually as well as practically, into the bourgeoisie. Immediately one is driven to ask: what does Mr. Calverton mean by revolutionary? Charles Peirce pointed out that if you wanted to find out the meaning of a word you must ask yourself what consequences would flow from accepting it in a certain sense. What revoltuion, then, is Mr. Calverton talking about?

In Russia, a very powerful revolution is still taking place, and a great many consequences follow for those who have spiritually participated in this movement. In the period of transition which began in 1905 the Russian intellectual had more to gain by being revolutionary than he had to lose; and even today, though the predominance of a Marxist theology is undoubtedly a drag on thought of the very first order in any department, the writer's work is in part cut out for him by the great struggle through which his society is going. He might, with sufficient imaginative resources, be more than a revolutionist, but he would fail in his office if he were less than one.

In America today, on the other hand, we are faced by an entirely different set of conditions. I do not mean that we are "prosperous" or

*In that article Mr. Calverton pointed out the lack of revolutionary vision among American intellectuals, and stressed the need of a new and more radical outlook upon literature than is entertained today even by our most advanced literati and intellectuals. Among the American intellectuals discussed in that article were Van Wyck Brooks, Waldo Frank, and Lewis Mumford. Mr. Mumford's reply to that article is printed here and answered by Mr. Calverton, because the editors of THE MODERN QUARTERLY believe that the issues involved are among the most important that face the minds of our generation.

that our financial and imperial institutions are working well: on the contrary, their weakness and ineptitude have never been more patent than it is at present, and the conditions that persisted among farmers, large groups of miners and textile workers, and many other occupations even during the wholly delusive period of "prosperity," give the lie to all the pretensions of the "new capitalism." No: it is not the presence of prosperity, but the absence of terror, hunger, and desperation that makes a revolution in the Russian sense of the word remote. More important, however, than the lack of desperate incentive is the fact that our society, unlike that of Russia in 1917, is a highly complicated industrial one, and the operation of our industries requires a high order of intelligent coöperation. Established relations, established habits, established patterns, could not be upset by rough-and-ready physical methods without working physical disasters far worse than Russia experienced: whereas the Communists in Russia could destroy a few ramshackle economic structures and begin at the foundation, a revolution in America must be accomplished as the Grand Central Station was built—tearing down the old, building up the new, and keeping the train service on schedule, all at the same time.

This method of building is far less dramatic than the bombing of the old structure, the sweeping clean of the new site, and the swift fabricating of a new building; and any revolutionary thought that is worthy the name in America must take this fact as a starting point, and not confuse itself with purely retrospective plans for raising barricades or seizing arsenals or proclaiming general strikes. Ours will be a revolutoin without dramatic moments—that, or it will be a debacle. To seek to stimulate this revolution by aimless words of revolt, by mere emotional rebellion, by *merely* joining a communist party or working inside a trade union—this has been the mistake of our previous revolutionary program, although parties, unions, and other groups, if led by men with principle and intelligence and enriched by real ideas, are all necessary to their consummation.

Our society, then, will not be changed by a catastrophe: it will be changed by the continuous pressure of organized economic groups, working towards concrete ends, the control of an industry, the socialization of a municipal utility, the nationalization of a resource, the planning of great public works. In back of these concrete changes must be the sense of general ends and ultimate goals: the growth of a common culture, the development of friendly ways of living, the spread and renewal of the arts and sciences and their infiltration into every aspect of life; for without such ends all our material renovations will be baseless and impermanent. To be conscious of these ends and to project them vividly is one of the definite rôles of the intellectual in preparing for the transformation; but the people who are thinking most briskly and concretely towards such consummations are people like Stuart Chase in economics, J. Russell Smith in geography, Benton MacKaye in regional planning, Clarence Stein in housing, John Dewey in education, people who are either quite unknown in orthodox revolutionary circles, or who are pontifically excommunicated, on purely dogmatic theological grounds, because they have not kissed Karl Marx's relics in public or made a proper genuflexion before the icon of Lenin. Before the thought of these men can seize our

whole society, there must be a steady preparation and discipline on the part of every individual and working group. Unless such re-education takes place, unless we master the intellectual and practical job for love of the work and for the society that is to emerge, we will not be in a position to take the place of those ambitious people who have mastered the job for the sake of money or the things that money will buy.

If Mr. Calverton believes that too many American writers are unconscious of the task before us and insensible to their opportunities and duties, I heartily agree with him: but this intellectual and spiritual slackness is as common, unfortunately, to those who write under a definite revolutionary label as it is to those of manifestly bourgeois tendency.

The other point where we need a little clearing up of terminology is in the use of words like socialist and individualist, the latter being one which Mr. Calverton applies with a sense of reproach. During the nineteenth century a whole mass of dialectics developed over the opposition between these two terms, with all their implications; but in the light of modern sociology the notion that they are exclusive terms has become absurd: Individual and social are aspects of a single organic relationship, like body and mind. In a period of transition, such as that which occupied the century after 1760, the social patterns were disrupted, and society, like a person suffering from a psychical disorder, was broken up into fragments or atoms: but in periods of fulfillment the alternative between individualism and socialism, at any given moment, is purely one of expediency *in view of the goal to be achieved.* The goal is neither individualism nor socialism: it is some concrete state or relation or manifestation, such as sufficient housing quarters, a lower death rate, the development of scientific research.

Mr. Calverton scoffs at the notion that we can learn anything about our present necessities from writers like Thoreau; and he thinks apparently that it was a little quaint and old-fashioned of me to say that those who share Thoreau's vision today begin again to dream Thoreau's dream, of what it means to live a whole human life. I do not think he would scoff so readily if he would examine the realities and not be put off by tags and catchwords. Certain practical and revolutionary consequences follow immediately for anyone who begins to re-think his life in terms suggested by Thoreau: they are applicable in Machine Age America as they are in Mahatma Gandhi's India. One of these consequences is the realization that our preparations for living are all extravagant, in proportion to the goods that we actually realize in life: hence we must deliberately shift emphasis from preparation to consummation. This has a very real bearing upon machine industry: if we follow Thoreau, we will minimize consumption and increase the amount of leisure; whereas if communized production is retained as our present scale of values, we should have a society devoted to the creation of a multitude of anemic bourgeois comforts, very busy, very prosperous, quite egalitarian even—but as dead to the real ends of existence as Potash and Perlmutter.

What, then, must be the attitude of the intellectual in America who seeks to further a creative transformation of our society? He must aim to keep alive in himself the essentials that are needed in a whole society

which is oriented to the good life; and, so aiming, he will help make possible that general re-orientation of groups and institutions which will bring such a society into existence. He will, necessarily, be in antagonism towards bourgeois institutions in all their many manifestations—as possession, as conspicuous waste, as consumptive respectability, as organized bribery and theft, as go-getting and money-getting, as dead ideas and solecisms, as miseducation—but he will not imagine that this antagonism is in itself equivalent to a program, nor will he confuse his reaction with the quite different ideas, attitudes, and means of life he seeks to develop. He will idealize neither the worker nor the machine; but, taking them as he finds them, he will use his energies to assist in the practical and spiritual liberation of the first, and in the decent subordination of the second. He will not work for immediate results: for it is more important that a large transformation should be well prepared than that an insignificant change be hastily accomplished. As our creative energies become focused, his ideas will march into action: there will be parties, movements, campaigns: but before this can happen, there must be fruitful deliberation and intelligence and a total grasp of the possibilities of life far greater than that exhibited by the best of the older school of European revolutionaries.

A CHALLENGE TO AMERICAN INTELLECTUALS
A CONTROVERSY
THE REVOLUTIONARY APPROACH

BY V. F. CALVERTON

THE difference between Mr. Mumford's position and mine is revealed in the titles of our respective articles.* Mr. Mumford is interested in an evolutionary approach to the new society, while I am interested in a revolutionary one. Despite his refusing to say so in precise words, it can easily be seen from his argument that Mr. Mumford is more concerned with the preparation of the individual for the new life than he is in that reorganization of society which is necessary in order to attain that end.

Now there are several points in reference to my position that I want to make clear at the beginning of this discussion. I am not opposed to the evolutionary approach on principle. I am opposed to it on the basis of fact. It doesn't work. It has never worked—and there is no sufficient reason to believe that it will ever work in the future, or at least not until man has advanced far beyond his present state and has instituted controls over social phenomena as well as over himself that can insure such a form of change. I might even go further and say that I wish Mr. Mumford were right; I wish men could set out gradually to control their relationships in the fashion that he suggests—"through the continuous pressure of organized economic groups, working towards concrete ends, the control of an industry, the socialization of a municipal utility, the nationalization of a resource, the planning of great public works"—but I am convinced that they cannot. And they cannot because our present social organization, with its economic pressures and its ideological controls, makes it altogether impossible. *Why don't men do these things successfully today?*—these things that Mr. Mumford wants to see them do. For two reasons: first, because the *milieu* is lacking in the drive and inspiration, and, secondly, because even where minds are moved with a desire for them, the surrounding controls are too thwarting, too frustrating, to allow them to be executed. Why is it that it is only in Soviet Russia that such things can be carried out on anything like a widespread and successful scale? Because the Russians are superior minds? Because the Russians are intrinsically any better than the Americans, the Irish, or the English? Not at all. But simply because the Russians have done the one thing that Mr. Mumford in his whole article tends to minimize if not dismiss: *they have overthrown the old order of control and instituted a new one*—a new one that allows for and expedites the execution of all

*Mr. Mumford did not entitle his article thus—the title is a result of editorial decision. Nevertheless, I think it fairly represents Mr. Mumford's attitude, especially when contrasted with mine.

the things Mr. Mumford desires: workers' control of industries, socialization of municipal utilities, the nationalization of resources, the planning of great public works. It was this very change in control, this revolutionary overthrow of old institutions and erection of new, that made possible the advance which Soviet Russia has made in the scientification of industry, the socialization of work, and the communization of life. Without that revolution in control, these things could not have been.

Such a revolution in control, however, does not mean that the methods employed should destroy existing economic structures—on the contrary! The structures should remain; the control should not. No revolutionary group in any industrial country today plans the destruction of present economic structures; on the contrary, it plans using them to the utmost, preserving every whit of them that is of value to the new order. That our society is a "highly complicated industrial one" is an advantage and not a disadvantage in the revolutionary process. Mr. Mumford seems to think that the fact that "the Communists in Russia could destroy a few ramshackle economic structures and begin at the foundation" was a help and not a hindrance to their revolution. It was the very inadequacy of the existing economic structures that made the work of the revolution more difficult. The tools of industry were absent. The miracle is that despite these inadequacies the revolution was able to survive. Mr. Mumford's statement that "the revolution in America must be accomplished, as the Grand Central Station was built, tearing down the old, building up the new, and keeping the train service on schedule, all at the same time," is an ideal toward which every revolutionist is anxious to work. In fact, every revolutionist is as anxious as Mr. Mumford to keep every structure intact, and even to save certain parts of outworn structures if there is any chance of their being converted into new. For some strange reason, thinkers like Mr. Mumford, who adopt the evolutionary logic, believe that revolutionaries set out to destroy without realizing the consequences of their destruction. No revolutionary aims to destroy anything that will be of aid to the new order. He seeks to destroy only those things which belong to the old order and cannot function in the new. It is here, of course, that the main conflict ensues, namely, as to which things belong to the old order and which to the new. But of one thing I am certain and that is that no revolutionary would disagree with Mr. Mumford about not destroying present economic structures which are the necessary basis of industrial society, regardless of what class is in control. And certainly Mr. Mumford would not object to the destruction of structures which are a hindrance to the development of a humanized society. The larger part of the "established relations, established habits, and established patterns, in the organization and working of industry could be maintained as they are today—so collective already has the organization of capitalist production become—except that their controls would be social instead of individualistic, the proletariat controling them through the organization of a workers' state. In Soviet Russia, the habits, relations, and patterns of collective work had to be established. This has been the greatest task of the Russian Revolution. In America, as in every industrial country, the economic relationships and

patterns have already been largely established. It is the controls that have to be disestablished, therefore, and not the structures.

What controls? Mr. Mumford would no doubt ask. The controls set up by the ruling class, the bourgeoisie, at every point of vantage in our society—controls which have been set up by every ruling class, but never with such effectiveness before, because never has a previous ruling class had so many avenues of power, and the dissemination of power, at its command. The basic control, to be sure, is economic, but its influence extends into every field where the ideology of the middle-class must be preserved: the press, the schools, the courts, the church, the radio, the cinema. It is this basic control which makes the realization of Mr. Mumford's evolutionary ideas of advance impossible in the present stage of society. Only a revolutionary change in control can make possible the advance desired.

Here, then, is where Mr. Mumford and I fundamentally disagree. He stresses the importance of the evolutionary advance that he believes will lead us to a new set of controls, and minimizes the importance of the actual change control if these evolutionary advances have not preceded. I, on the other hand, contend that these evolutionary advances which he suggests can never be made under the present type of capitalistic controls—I should be for them as much as Mr. Mumford if they could be made—and that those advances which are often pointed out as evidencing such evolution inevitably cost the workers more than they gain; and further, that it is the actual change of control which is more important, since without it nothing new can be accomplished in the way of emancipating the workers or in the construction of a civilization based upon a non-capitalistic ideology and economics.

Now it goes without saying, it seems to me, *that no change in control would amount to anything at all unless those who effected the change knew what it was about, and were prepared to meet its needs and consequences.* "Raising barricades, or seizing arsenals, or proclaiming general strikes," spell nothing but disaster if those active in the process are ill-equipped to take advantage of what they have started. It is absurd, for instance, except for agitational purposes perhaps, to raise barricades or seize arsenals if the military is 100% against you. Barricades, after all, are an outmoded form of defense or attack at the present time, and, therefore, scarcely need mention at all. It is only when you have gotten some foothold in the army, when defections and mutinies have begun to occur, and when your propaganda is able to have effect, that armed revolt can ever be a success, particularly in the present stage of military attack and counter-attack. That is why it is only during a catastrophe—as in the case of Russia, Germany, Hungary, at the end of the last war—that seizure of control can very successfully occur. The catastrophe, of course, does not have to be a war; any cataclysm which causes the foundations of control, including the army and air fleet, to falter, might supply the precise moment. Would it have been possible for the middle-class ever to have seized control in England in the sixteen-forties if Cromwell had made speeches but had had no army to enforce them? Obviously not. It was the catastrophe which evolved out of the conflict that made

the revolution in control possible. It was the presence of force, which has always been the basis of the state, that was necessary to the change of control. And it will only be force again, as has been borne out in Europe since the war, and in Germany is becoming even more evident at the present moment, that will be decisive in the future conflict of classes for control. While the past has conclusively revealed the rôle that force has played in history, no period, it must be admitted, has made that rôle more conspicuous than the one which we have witnessed in the last sixteen years in almost every European country as well as America.

Mr. Mumford's statement, then, that our society will not be changed by catastrophe is scarcely based upon a very sound conclusion. Not that everyone would not wish he were correct. There is no intelligent radical who would not want a revolution without the use of force—or the presence of catastrophe. The reason that I disagree with Mr. Mumford, for instance, is that I do not want to deceive myself with words which obscure the vital realities of our age. There is no advantage in denying force, when force is a determining reality in our civilization. Nor is there any wisdom in stressing the greater importance of evolutionary advances over revolutionary ones, when, from the point of view of the proletariat, the former cannot have meaning without the success of the latter.

Another fundamental difference between Mr. Mumford's position and mine is that he looks upon the working of society as an organic unit, while I look upon it as a conflict in class-units. Although he is "in antagonism toward bourgeois institutions," his antagonism is personal rather than social. He does not see the "transformation" in which he is interested as a class-transformation—but as a creative intellectual one. His words about that "general re-orientation of groups and institutions which will bring such a society into existence" illustrate exactly what I mean. Here we have again the evolutionary approach in another aspect. It represents here, as it does elsewhere, a form of wish-fulfillment thought that is not unakin to rhetoric in its appeal. Let us take Germany today, one of the highest industrialized countries in the world, as an instance of its fallacy. England, however, would do just as well. What do Mr. Mumford's words mean when set beside what is happening in those countries today? Is the struggle between democracy and dictatorship in Germany, for instance, and in other countries as well, heedful of the "general re-orientation" that Mr. Mumford seeks? Is the "fruitful deliberation and intelligence" which he advocates there? Not at all. And this is what brings us to the crux of this controversy. Mr. Mumford's arguments are those of an intellectual who wants mass-movements to behave like the ideas of his brain. But they simply don't. And, in my opinion, the most important advance in wisdom that the intellectual can make today is the realization of that fact. It is all very well to talk about the need for re-education, and the value of re-orientation, and no radical would deny their significance, but the more important thing is to see life realities as they actually are, the masses that have already been set in motion, and talk in terms of them instead of the concepts that the intellectual prefers. It is just as futile to talk about re-education and re-orientation to the masses in Germany today as it is to argue for peace when every nation is

arming itself intensively for war. The conflict is really between what we want as individuals and what we can get in society as it actually is. The masses in Germany today have certain demands; the answer to those demands is what is important at the present time. Lenin's great success in the Russian Revolution was due to the fact that he sensed correctly the desires of the masses, and on the basis of that was able to establish control. If Lenin had waited to re-educate the masses, there would never have been a revolution. But because there was a revolution the masses in Soviet Russia are now being re-educated. The tendency toward dictatorship in the world today, realized as it is already in a number of countries, and on the verge of realization in several others, cannot be fought by arguments in favor of re-education or re-orientation—any more than the future war can be stopped by the exhortations of the pacifists. Social tendencies have deeper roots than words. Already, certain of them have gathered a momentum that can never be stopped; at best, following in the path of their momentum, they can be utilized for better ends. But social tendencies can only be utilized in a social way; the words of an individual can have no effect upon them unless they are allied to a social movement. Take dictatorship again, as an example—or war. All the urgings for re-education in the democratic tradition, or for democratic re-orientation, as it were, are of no avail in the face of modern economic tendency. We have to deal with what we have—and not what we want. If we want a peaceful world, we do not get it by prating words of peace when every force in the world is making for war. What we must do is to get at grips with the forces themselves, and such getting at grips, so to speak, is a social function that no individual can achieve alone. And it is only by such getting at grips that any transformation is ever made. To talk about re-education and re-orientation as Mr. Mumford does is nothing short of suicidal. It is not getting at grips at all. It is like trying to escape the ugliness of a proposition by describing it in exquisite words. We cannot get at grips with the crucifying realities that face us today by talking about re-education; we have to talk about what is closer to fact, closer to change, closer to life—class-struggle, class-exploitation, class-brutality, class-suppression. We have to see the problem of the world today in terms of its class-relationships, its class-dynamics. This Mr. Mumford does not do. And that is why he throws his stress upon re-education instead of revolution as the more important step in the social process.

But let us examine the re-education idea a little more minutely. How can one talk about the need of re-education for the workers, when our society fills the workers' minds every day, every hour, with the propaganda of Americanism? Every agency of education is in the command of the bourgeoisie—radio, cinema, church, newspapers, schools. Take the schools as the main source of education at the present time. Examine the middle-class propositions inculcated in the minds of the pupils from childhood. What chance has a worker's ideology to oppose such a mechanism? But if the workers themselves do not oppose it, then there is no need to talk about their emancipation—such is the answer that usually follows. If one pursued that logic, however, the slaves would never

have been freed in the South. Most of the slaves refused to follow even the revolts that were begun by the members of their own race. It was only when they were freed by forces set in motion by the conflict between an agrarian and an industrial civilization that they were able to appreciate the meaning of freedom and make the advance that their race has made in recent generations. This is also true of the workers. Only the vanguard of the proletariat in any country can ever be prepared to take over control. To wait for the whole proletariat to be thus prepared would be to postpone the revolution indefinitely—this is really what the liberal desires although he would never admit it—since the conditions set up by the middle class to thwart such preparations are of a kind that continually prevent such fulfillment. Re-education thus can only be effective when the control of society has been changed. That does not mean that the idea of re-education should be despised; on the contrary, it should be encouraged. *But it does mean that re-education as a main emphasis is futile* since it is only through a revolution in control that the re-education of the proletariat as a whole can ever be achieved.

But America is different! Such is the ever-recurrent argument. In America a revolution is impossible; the very idea of it is so remote as to be ridiculous. "It is not the presence of prosperity, but the absence of terror, hunger, and desperation that makes a revolution [in America] in the Russian sense of the word remote."—How well these words of Mr. Mumford typify this attittude! Now, let us see whether America does represent this exception: In the first place, it is true, since 1914 America has been the favored country of the world economically, and prior to the current depression attained a prosperity that had no counterpart in Europe. While Europe destroyed itself in the war, America alone profited by the destruction. Then after the war American prosperity increased because of the lack of stabilization of European economy. Now that those conditions have passed, and European markets have become comparatively stabilized, and the myth of eternal prosperity has been exploded, America has entered into another stage in its economic history. Already hunger and desperation are beginning to be felt in every part of the country. When the effects of this hunger and desperation take on a more drastic social turn, the use of terror will immediately follow. In fact, it ought to be said here that terror is not as alien a phenomenon in America as Mr. Mumford thinks. Indeed, the whole history of class-struggle in America has been marked by terrorism. Anyone intimate with the mining regions and the company police knows that the terrorism active there is no less vicious than that which is employed in any other part of the world. The cold-blooded massacre of strikers by the militia, the frame-ups of radicals by the police, *the deportation delirium,* the Mooney-Billings case, the Sacco-Vanzetti murder, the recent Gastonia trials, are evidence enough of terrorism from the point of view of workers to make any comment on its absence seem somewhat silly and sentimental.

Democracy has always been the weapon used by the middle-class to defeat the proletariat; indeed, it has been used by upper classes in every society to suppress the lower classes, and has been used as much in this fashion in America as in Europe. What, then, does Mr. Mumford mean

by the absence of terror in America? Part of what he means, no doubt, is to be found in the fact that a revolutionary movement can exist in America without becoming an underground organization. (The opposite will no doubt be true within the next few years.) While this is true in the meanwhile, however, Mr. Mumford knows full well that whenever that organization grows or becomes dangerously active, terrorism is immediately used as a suppressive. Terrorism is never used where there is no one to terrorize. If the Russian muzhiks had been as docile as the American workers in the last fifteen years, and the Russian revolutionaries as innocuous as the leaders of our so-called progressive *movements*, terrorism would never have been employed in Russia. Terrorism has not been used against the American workers as a whole because there has been no need for it. Terrorism has been applied, nevertheless, via the militia, wherever there was need of it. But this kind of terrorism scarcely touches the intellectual unless he happens to be linked up with a *revolutionary* movement. The intellectual in America has not been terrorized—nor has he often been driven by hunger or desperation into revolutionary channels. His means of livelihood have been too obviously middle-class for him to risk a revolutionary stand. *Terrorism* at Ludlow or Gastonia becomes a most regrettable illustration of injustice to the intellectuals in New York, Boston, and Cape Cod. Terrorism really only becomes terrorism to those to whom it is directly or indirectly applied. It is not terrorism to the American intellectuals to whom it has no application—so ineffectual is their social influence, even when it is not avowedly reactionary.

There is every reason to expect developments in America in the near future somewhat akin to those active in other industrial countries today. It is true, that the absence of a sufficiently definite conflict between the landed and the industrial interests, finding expression in antagonistic political parties, will make the political developments in America differ considerably from those in European countries. The trade union movement also, for similar and other reasons that cannot be taken up here, will never be able to play the part that it has done in European countries. If Mr. Mumford meant that we need re-education and re-orientation along these lines, new realizations of the nature of the American background, but infused always with revolutionary emphasis and purpose, I should agree with him completely. But such re-education and re-orientation as he alludes to in his article are not of this revolutionary stamp. His ideas of re-education and re-orientation are too far removed from the masses and the possibilities of mass-action. The re-education or re-orientation that we need must be along definite class lines, and aimed at a definite revolutionary end.

Mr. Mumford intimates in his article that I am too easily "put off by tags and catchwords"—and, therefore, fail to see the realities in the case. Now, paradoxical though it may seem, I agree with Mr. Mumford as to the wisdom of avoiding "tags and catchwords" which succeed only in confusing issues that otherwise might be clearly understood. "Tags and catchwords" are always a handicap where analysis is needed. The only trouble is, we all have a tendency to speak of the phrases of another,

when one disagrees with him, as representing tags and catchwords, however anxious the other has been to avoid that distinction—or rather lack of it. Let us take this very controversy as an illustration of that fact. Mr. Mumford is certain, or very near it, that I have been beguiled by the "catchwords" of the radical, accepted such words as "class-struggle," "class-exploitation," and the like, and failed to see the more difficult and intricate distinctions that underlie the movement of social phenomena. I, in turn, am equally convinced that Mr. Mumford is guilty of another category of "catchwords"—his mind having been ensnared by the logic of the liberal. Now I know that Mr. Mumford does not consider himself a liberal—so let me instance what I mean by the logic of the liberal, and the phraseology that he is always prone to employ. In the first place, Mr. Mumford's tendency to minimize the importance of revolutionary action and to stress the greater importance of evolutionary, which we have already discussed, is one of the best evidences of the distinction between the attitude of the liberal and that of the radical. But let us go further and select a few more specific illustrations: "The intellectual," Mr. Mumford writes, "must aim to keep alive in himself the essentials that are needed in a whole society which is oriented to the good life." Now this is an exact example of what I call *liberal* logic. To begin with, we have struck here against the first of those catchwords of the liberal—"the good life." Is there anything less "pat" about such a phrase as "the good life" than there is about such phrases as "class-consciousness" or "workers' triumph"? It would be harder for Mr. Mumford to define *the good life* in terms acceptable to many, unless he reduced his definition to a form so general that it became meaningless, than it would be to define *class-consciousness* and *workers' triumph* to the satisfaction of even a professor. Nevertheless, the *good life* is a "pat"phrase, a tag and a catchword, as it were, in all liberal writing—accepted with the same readiness that radicals accept certain of their tags and catchwords. It is at this point that I should like to ask—good life for whom? Whatever the *good life* is, we know that the very aspects of it that would make it good, at the same time would make it attainable only by the few. How can workers, lassoed to "the belt," find time to "prepare themselves," in the ways that Mr. Mumford thinks they should, "for the good life"? It is reasonable enough for Mr. Bertrand Russell to write about *the good life,* for he has known something of what he would consider a good life, just as it is for Mr. Mumford, who has been able to know something of a good life in other ways, but in so far as the workers are concerned this prescription is worthless. It means nothing to the workers; it can mean nothing to them, until we can get such a society in which it is possible for the masses to exercise control of social life and not be subject to the control and exploitation of a ruling class. All talk of the good life, and the attempt to live it, then, is but part of liberal doctrine, which has meaning only to those who can live it, and not to those who cannot. In other words, it is absurd to advise a worker, enslaved by his employer, subject to every vicissitude of economic circumstance, the rise and fall of prices, rent, and wages, and the ever-threatening presence of unemployment, to think of and live, or even prepare himself for, the good life.

It is to only those people, those classes, which include most intellectuals, who are not thus harassed, that such talk of the good life can have any meaning or appeal. And the same criticism holds true of another "pat" phrase which Mr. Mumford uses, and which is familiar in all liberal writing, that of trying "to live a whole human life." The very structure of our society makes it impossible for the millions ever to live what is called "a whole human life"—and the phrase is a "pat" one, let us add, because argument as to its meaning could be endless, since its connotations would vary with almost every individual.

Again we are driven back to what we earlier stressed, namely, that it is futile to talk about the good life—unless it be for the sake of philosophers, literati, professors, and the upper classes in general— until we have revolutionized the control of society so that the good life is attainable by all. Otherwise, such talk is class-talk—and not mass-talk. As weak, in fact, as the words of the preacher who assures his congregation that the poor should be thankful that they do not have the cares of wealth to weigh them down. Mr. Mumford's very emphasis upon the good life, and his lack of emphasis upon the revolutionary action necessary for its realization—not by an isolated Thoreau but by all—illustrates the lack of radicalism in his thesis. It is the intellectual, however, rather than the worker, Mr. Mumford may reply, who should orient himself to the good life. But the intellectual who would orient *himself* to the good life—assuming that the good life could exist for anyone but the few in such a society as ours—while the millions are excluded from even a glimpse at it, is a liberal and not a revolutionary, an individualist and not a communist. He thinks of the good life in terms of the individual and not the group, and is more interested in individual advance than in social progress.

It is in that contrast that the important differences between individualist and communist, at which Mr. Mumford demurs, is to be seen. Modern individualism, born out of the commercial and industrial revolutions several centuries ago, and finding its justification in the economic philosophy of *laissez-faire,* created a new state of mind in the western world. Growing out of the rise of the middle-class, and revolving about private property as its basis, this new state of mind—let us call it *the modern mind*—soon became embedded in every aspect of modern life. Its entire emphasis, in legislatures, in courts, in schools, was individualistic. Above all, the individual and his property were protected against the encroachments of the state. The social-groupings of the Middle Ages, for instance, were disrupted, and the struggle in every field took on an individualistic turn. It was only with the development of collective production on the part of the proletariat that a social grouping was again begun. In order to fight that social-grouping, the modern state, which is individualistic, has tried to use every means to prevent the proletariat from becoming socially-conscious. The conflict today is still of that type—the proletariat representing the social or communist motivation in modern society, and the state—in other words, the middle class, representing the individualistic. It is not hard to see, therefore, that the distinction is a most significant one. The intellectual who is an individualist is one who thinks of life in terms of himself, as against any encroachments on the part of society—

Thoreau is a good example—while the communist is one who thinks of life in terms of the group and of his own individual life as subservient to that group-end.

The struggle between the individual and the group is an ancient one, and to say, as Mr. Mumford does, "individual and social are aspects of a single organic relationship, like body and mind," is to evade all the difficulties resident in the problem. Ever since the break-up of communal relations in early primitive society, the struggle has continued. Wherever economic factors have allowed for the rise of individualism in opposition to group control, social decay has inevitably set in. The fall of societies can be attributed much more distinctly to that factor than to any other. To be sure, such a condition is always a reflection of more underlying factors in economic life. Never before has man faced a period in his history when the struggle between individualistic and social factors has been so enormously disastrous. As Gerald Heard pointed out, civilization today, because of that struggle, its intensity and desperation, is at the point of crash. Of what meaning, then, are Mr. Mumford's words—"in periods of fulfillment the alternative between individualism and socialism, at any given moment, is purely one of expediency in view of the goal to be achieved." We can never get to a period of fulfillment, however, until we have gotten rid of the society that thwarts it. Here, as before, Mr. Mumford talks about fulfillment, but never comes to grips with what is necessary to attain it.

Mr. Mumford's defense of Thoreau is but another aspect of this same individualistic logic. No one denies that Thoreau's revolt was of moment at the time when it occurred. But Thoreau's retreat and isolation, his vision of the new way of life, its exquisite economies and spiritual denials, has no meaning today. I do not say that it can have no meaning to an individual here and there, who, through auspicious circumstance, can so master his life that he can "begin again to dream Thoreau's dream." What I do say, however, is that it can have no meaning to the masses, nor have any social effect upon a mass-civilization such as we have today. Thoreau was not interested in the masses. Mass-civilizations had not even been born in his day. He was an anarcho-individualist who thought of life in terms of isolation rather than association. In his day when isolation was possible, when individualism had its roots in the society of his time, his words carried with them challenge and conviction. Today they are dead stuff. Of what meaning is it to the masses if we tell them, employing the words of Mr. Mumford, that "if we follow Thoreau we will minimize consumption and increase the amount of leisure"? Take the unemployed millions of today—what can such words mean to them? Their consumption is already reduced to the barest minimum, and their leisure is all too great for their happiness. They need jobs, a simple, cruel reality which our mass civilization has driven into our social consciousness with all too deadly a drive. Can Thoreau's words mean anything to them? I am willing to grant Mr. Mumford that they might mean a great deal to them if we had a communal civilization—but that necessitates the overthrow of our present capitalistic civilization, a fact which Mr. Mumford does not even mention in this connection. Then

to whom can Thoreau's words have any meaning? Only to those who think still in individualistic terms, and are trying thus to evade the unenticing realities of a mass-civilization with its new economic and political needs.

In conclusion, then, let me say that the conflict here between Mr. Mumford and myself is an irreconcilable one. It is a conflict between two different philosophies and two different programs. Mr. Mumford's logic will appeal to those liberals and socialists who adopt his attitude of mind and conviction; mine will appeal to those radicals who adopt a revolutionary, communist logic. The battle cannot be solved by words. The ideologies involved go deeper than words—far deeper. It is only the defeat of the one by the other that can ever bring the conflict to an end. The conflict is on in every country in the western world today. It is just beginning to ripen in America. Mr. Mumford wants, as a goal, "the growth of a common culture, the development of friendly ways of living, the spread and renewal of the arts and sciences and their infiltration into every aspect of life," but he does not see, or, in terms of his logic, cannot see, that these things can only come through a change in objective institutions and controls. Our task is to effect that revolutionary change. Otherwise our words are meaningless and deceptive—for it is only by such a revolutionary change that a common culture can be born, friendly ways of living be developed, and the arts and sciences be spread and renewed.

SOCIAL CHANGE AND ITS HUMAN DIRECTION

BY JOHN DEWEY

THERE is no intellectual problem as practically urgent at the present time as that of the nature of deliberate or intelligent human control of social change. The problem is more or less confused by the sharp separation that is often made between human desire and purpose as factors and history, evolution and their laws. On one side, this divorce leads to a kind of fatalism depressing to effort. If historical movement and evolution is going to produce certain results anyway, the stimulus to endeavor is reduced. On the other side, the division leads to faith in unconditioned freedom of will; it is supposed to be able to produce the most revolutionary social changes if only it wills with sufficient intensity.

It is easier to feel the inadequacy of theories that lead to such extreme and one-sided results, than it is to see clearly just what is at fault in them. It is easier to fall back upon some vague combination of impersonal social forces and personal volition than it is to get a clear view of how between them the interaction actually goes on. For the problem involves a theory of the nature of the causation of social changes, and such a theory is difficult to attain in any coherent form.

Let us start by forgetting the past and occupying ourselves with a present. Any present always offers itself as a transition, a passage, or becoming. There is movement from something to something else, as the events of today are a transition from those of yesterday to those of tomorrow. In its vital sense, this is the only history that takes place. Now, human beings are involved in some phases of the transition. They have needs, wants, preferences and they make plans and put forth efforts. On a small scale, no one doubts the efficacy of this factor. A physician aims to cure his patients rather than to let them die; an engineer to build a bridge that will endure certain strains and stresses. By such plans and acts some changes taking place are directed to one outcome rather than to another. I can see no difference in *principle* between such facts, universally acknowledged in small scale matters, and the direction of social changes on a wide scale. The difference in area and in complexity is, of course, enormous. It requires much more organization and concert of effort on the broad scale than on the small one of the individual's effort in his own calling.

But even on the narrow scale, there is always a background of social organization which supports and conditions. Savages did not try to build steel bridges, nor would they have known how to do it if they had tried. Social conditions put a reservoir of knowledge and of disposable energy at the command of the physician and the engineer. Available resources

suggest both the things to attempt, the objects to strive for, and the ways of doing. The passage or transition that constitutes the present is always from *something that is there.* All intelligent direction and control of the transition take account of this something. They are intelligent and efficacious in the degree that the conditions which are moving are examined and understood. In short, desire, purpose, planning, everything that we call volition, are conditioned by something beyond themselves which they must utilize; volition does not operate in a void.

This fact is evident enough in the case of control and accomplishment in physical matters. Water, coal, iron, do not organize themselves into the steam engine spontaneously; human volition—desire and endeavor—intervene. But the latter do not and cannot produce the engine apart from external conditions and energies which are analyzed and comprehended in order that they may be used. The knowledge and the technical skill required to understand and utilize are in turn as much socially conditioned as the use of water and coal is physically conditioned. The very idea of a steam engine can arise only when there is already in existence a social and industrial state of affairs that demands mechanical power.

These remarks may seem too obvious to be worth saying. Yet they contain in their implications, it seems to me, the key to the problem of intelligent direction of social affairs as far as this problem is bound up with that of historical tendencies and laws. They indicate what history is and what history is not in connection with present efforts at social change and reconstruction. Positively speaking, the need to understand the state of affairs which is in passage to something different, if the change is to be directed by man, points to the need of knowledge of history, knowledge of how the existing state of things came to be. It is not the past which moves, which has force. For it has ceased to be, and what does not exist has no force. But we cannot *know* what exists, we cannot analyze and grasp it, unless we reconstruct its history.

The fallacy which regards the order of historical events as something which will determine the future irrespective of present volition, of present human desire and struggle, rests upon converting the significance of history *as a mode of understanding and knowing the present* into the notion that the past is an active agency. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance of history in its first capacity; as, that is, a method of getting an intellectual hold upon the conditions that have to be dealt with; seeing what obstacles they present and what leverages they offer, what means they supply, for our plans and purposes. But there are no historical forces which will shape the future, for what operates is precisely and only what is present. That it will operate in any case, is true; the question is how far it will operate blindly and how far through the medium of intelligent direction and planning. The latter demands understanding of what is there, and this in turn demands knowledge of historical conditions.

Every general theory or philosophy of history is thus a form of present social valuations. That is to say, it is part of the process of viewing and examining the present to discover what possibilities are resident in it and

how present desire, purpose and effort should proceed. When existing problems are as definitely economic as they are at present an economic philosophy of history will be uppermost because that is the subject-matter which is most related to what we now need to understand and to do. It may sound strange to say that all significant history is history of the present, and that it changes as the needs and problems of the present change. But this is largely because men, when they think of history, think of it as something merely past. They forget that this past was once its own present, and that in that present men faced the future exactly as we do now; that they had their own present conditions to understand and deal with, their own preferences, desires, choice to make, plans to form. When they lived and acted, they lived and acted in a present which was a movement, a transition into something different and new. Their history was not a past to them.

What happens socially is always, in short, an interaction of present human desire and determination with existing, or present, conditions. That is so now and it always has been so. Any genuine reference to history and historical movements only reveals this fact. It does not disclose forces acting automatically without respect to human desire and effort. Just because this statement is so general in scope, it throws, however, no light upon the practical problem of what men are to desire and strive for today if they are to act intelligently in directing social change. The latter question demands an understanding of existing social conditions. And here, as has already been indicated, it is the facts of the material culture of an age of the machine and technology that are important. The history of the economic revolution from agrarianism to industrialism does not determine what the future is bound to be. But it does enable us to locate the outstanding traits of the present social situation as far as these afford the conditions to be reckoned with in present human dealing with social change. It is even more futile to refuse to face the facts which this history presents to our understanding than it is to rely upon an automatic working of historic evolution to determine a better future.

This futility abounds at present. Its practical outcome is drift, and, quite likely, drifting toward catastrophe. Upon the whole, the large business men, the captains of industry, do not know what they are doing at present. They do not know, that is, in any larger sense, in the sense of being aware of what the general social consequences of what they are doing will be. They react to immediate situations and turn them to pecuniary account. It is not merely the French Bourbons who act upon the policy of "after us, the deluge." These men may profess a philosophy of eighteenth century individualism, of *laissez-faire* and optimism, but they do not act upon it or upon any philosophy, unless turning immediate situations to money profit be called a philosophy. And the general public acquiesces in the same policy of drift—if drift can be called a policy.

I do not know enough about Marx to enter into the discussion concerning his philosophy. But those who interpret his philosophy, whether correctly or incorrectly, as one of an automatic working of historical forces not only have, as it seems to me, an entirely false conception of

the relation of the past to the present and its future, but they are virtually accomplices in the policy of drift. On the other hand, there is very much in the theory of Marx which is of immense significance in the analysis and understanding of the present, of the conditions that make it what it is, and that suggest the direction which human desire, purpose and sustained effort should take. History at least enables us to grasp intellectually the collectivistic condition in which we now live. And such a grasp is a necessary precondition of intelligent endeavor to direct the changes which are to take place in what is going on.

THE DOCTRINAL CRISIS IN SOCIALISM

BY MAX EASTMAN

THE cause of the doctrinal crisis in socialism is the growth of a new genetic logic and psychology which oppose the fundamental Marxian view of the mind. Darwin's science of the origin of species was greeted by Marx, and has been celebrated by Marxians, as a happy confirmation of their philosophy of dialectic evolution. But while they were so happy about it, this science was quietly eating away the roots of their philosophy. Showing that all life evolved in a struggle for survival, and that the organs of the body were developed according to their fitness to function in that struggle, it arrived at the conception of the brain, and thus of the mind itself, as an instrument of survival. It showed that, studied in its origin and development, the mind is primarily a practical apparatus for attaining ends determined by the instinctive impulses. The "idea" is—as Schopenhauer and not Hegel guessed—secondary and subordinate to the "will." And although Marx in his *Theses on Feuerbach* attained a glimpse of this modern attitude, he built his philosophy of dialectic materialism upon the opposite assumption, that the mind is *in its essence* disinterested. Even in their origin the motions of thought are, according to this philosophy, a mere logical reflection of the motions of matter. Marxians must now either renounce that old opinion and accept the modern functional view of the mind, or renounce their still more important thesis that everything must be studied in its origin and development.

But once they accept this modern view of the mind, they will be compelled to restate their whole theory of socialism. For a man who conceives in any degree this relation between his mind and his will, must inevitably separate that part of his thinking which is an objective definition of facts, from that part which is a plan for arriving at a desired goal on the basis of these facts. Marxism makes no such separation, but presents the whole thing—the definition of fact, the goal of desire, and the plan for achieving it—as a single piece of scientific "knowledge." The dying away of the dictatorship of the proletariat in a coöperative society is not an *aim* which the Marxist sets for himself; it is a fact in the future "reflected" in the mind of the Marxist, just as facts in the past and present are reflected. The class struggle is not a *method* by which we may achieve that aim; it is the "dialectic process" by which it is being achieved. Marxian propaganda does not say, as a man of modern common-sense would, "If we do so-and-so, we can create the communist society which we *desire*." It says, "A communist society is being created in such-and-such a way; fall in with the inevitable historic process which we, the Marxists, *know*."

Modern science has nothing to do with such vast pretenses at knowledge. Modern science is sceptical. It deals in working hypotheses. It concerns itself with *existing facts* and with *methods* by which they may be changed. Its slogan is no longer prediction, but control. Its devotees are not prophets, but engineers.

I have spoken as though this all derived from Darwin, because I wish to connect it with the genetic view which Marxism itself insists on. It has of course many sources. The mere accumulating experience of the race has taught us to beware of religious beliefs, whether disguised as philosophies or not. And the philosophy of dialectic matreialism is, like all other philosophies, a disguised religion—an intellectual scheme for convincing the believer that the powers of the objective world are on his side. "They are blind and merely material powers—yes, but they are on our side!"—That is Dialectic Materialism. It is the last surviving cold shred of religious consolation.

The whole radical and progressive spirit of the age is against this kind of thinking. It is against "philosophy"—just as Marx and Engels tried to be, and thought they were. It demands that the theory of class struggle and proletarian dictatorship be restated in the form of plan-of-action for achieving a desired goal that is not inevitable but *possible*. Marx and Engels made it a point of honor to keep abreast of the most advanced science of their day. Contemporary Marxists in clinging to this old philosophy are a generation behind. Their dim consciousness of this, and the pressure upon them from progressive minds in other branches of science, is a second cause of the doctrinal crisis we are discussing.

A third cause is the phenomenon of Lenin and the Bolshevik Revolution. Lenin's mind was a modern scientific one. He was an engineer, not a prophet. His interest was in control, not prediction—method, not creed. His book, *What To Do?* recklessly ignores and transgresses the philosophy of dialectic materialism. That book was the foundation of a modern science of engineering with class forces. Lenin was denounced all his life by orthodox Marxists as a heretic, and rightly so. In my book on *The Science of Revolution*[1] I have shown that every one of the nine principal innovations introduced by Lenin into the theory and practice of socialism was a direct or indirect expression of this changed attitude of mind. In Marx, the Hegelian metaphysician was dominant over the scientist; in Lenin, the scientific thinker gained the victory.

"From a society in which one class exploits another *the only way out* is through the dictatorship of the exploited class," Lenin says. And again: "Marx's teaching about the class struggle leads inevitably to a recognition . . . [that] the overthrow of the bourgeoisie is *attainable only through* the transformation of the proletariat into a ruling class."

How did Marx express this same teaching?

"The new thing that I did consisted in demonstrating . . . that the class struggle *inevitably leads* to the dictatorship of the proletariat."

It is not a contradiction, but the difference is enormous. It is the difference between two epochs in the evolution of human intelligence. We live in an engineering age, an age dominated by practical science and the

[1] *Marx and Lenin, The Science of Revolution.*

scepticism, or suspended judgment, essential to all unfinished scientific procedure. Philosophy, except as a criticism of the findings of the various sciences, is about dead. For revolutionists it should be dead and buried. That is the difference between Marx and Lenin. In the above quotation from Marx there is a residue of philosophic belief; Lenin's formulation is scientific method pure and simple. This innovation, combined with the fact that Lenin succeeded by means of his *practical science* in guiding to victory a proletarian revolution in the country where it was *philosophically* not to be permitted, is the third cause of the doctrinal crisis in socialism.

The crisis consists in this: that Marxism in so far as it is a practical science of proletarian revolution has survived the changes in human thinking introduced by Darwin, has survived the decline of the philosopher and the ascendancy of the engineer, has been verified by the success of Lenin's policy and party in the Russian Revolution. But Marxism as a system of philosophic belief about the inevitable dialectical development of human history has been eaten away and destroyed by these same three things.

The solution of the crisis would be far more simple if Lenin had been aware of his originality and independence. Was it not Pascal who said, "Every man, even the strongest, bows down to something." Lenin bowed down to Karl Marx. So far as I know, not one word of critical dissent from the acts or writings of Karl Marx ever escaped his lips. Owing to this astonishing fixation, Lenin continually declared his absolute allegiance to the philosophy of Dialectic Materialism, spoke with vast reverence of Engels' rather naïve book, *Anti-Dühring,* and introduced no end of obscurity and unconscious casuistry into his own incomparable scientific writings. A strange story altogether! Marx and Engels believed they were abandoning all philosophy when they were only inventing a new one; Lenin believed he was adhering to theirs, when he was really achieving their ambition to abandon all philosophy.

As a result of this strange circumstance, the Bolsheviks are as reactionary in theory as they are progressive in practice. Their attitude toward the theoretical development of Marxism in the light of modern science is one of absolute and pig-headed obstructionism. They worship Lenin and have even substituted the word "Leninism" for "Marxism," but they will not acknowledge the one thing that would justify, or at least excuse, this procedure—namely, that Lenin did make a deep departure in principle from the orthodox Marxian theory. He was the first purely scientific engineer of revolution. He converted Marxism, albeit unconsciously, from an antiquated Hegelian philosophy into a modern engineering science.

The first step toward solving the crisis is to abandon the philosophy of dialectic materialism, putting in its place the attitude of natural science, which in so far as it is materialistic Engels denounced as "shallow and vulgar." The next step is to restate the whole Marxian theory in the form of practical science—that is, ceasing to confuse the ideal, or goal to be achieved, with the definition of the facts. It means only to take seriously the assertion of Marx and Engels that their theories are a "program of action," for a program of action is a working hypothesis, and not a system of philosophy. The next step is to recognize that Lenin really anticipated

this change, and that Bolshevism is Marxism stripped of the last remnants of philosophic consolation and converted into a hard-headed technique for changing the social world.

These three steps will not solve the doctrinal crisis, because each of them gives rise to a host of new problems. Particularly the last one—for Bolshevism has not been a complete success, even within the limits set by historic conditions, and after the revolutionary criticism of Marx a revolutionary criticism of Lenin is entirely in order. Those who enter upon this intellectual venture, however, should bear in mind that the discussion is going to be continually confused by people who pretend to be interested in the scientific problem, but whose real interest is in corrupting the science in order to sap the force of the revolution. Marxism is crying out for a *revolutionary* revision on the basis of modern experience and modern scientific discoveries, but *counter-revolutionary* revisionism is for that very reason even a more insidious danger than it was before.

THE MEANING OF MARXISM

BY SIDNEY HOOK

SINCE its very inception the doctrines of Marx have been in a crisis. First it was the academic German professors of economics who protested against its lack of scientific objectivity, condemning it because it was not *wertfrei*. Later came the revisionists and syndicalists, who from different points of view attacked its soulless mechanism and economic fatalism. After them came the revolutionary Marxists who accused the self-styled orthodox of concealing Marx's revolutionary motivation behind Marxian dogmas. Today revolutionary revisionists are urging that Marx be brought up to date with the newer findings of physics, biology and psychology. It is clear that a system of thought which has lived through so many crises must be very much alive indeed. Each age has brought a new refutation and a new defence until in the welter of denial and counter-denial the meaning of Marxism has become vague and obscure. In some quarters it has become an epithet of abuse; in others, an honorific term for militant class-consciousness. In Russia, it is a symbol of revolutionary theology; in Germany, of a vague social religion; in France, of social reform, and in England and America, of wrong-headed political tactics. The trouble has been that both friend and foe have been more anxious to discover whether Marxism is true or false than what Marxism, as a system of thought contained in the writings of Karl Marx, actually *means*. It is Marx's *meaning* that must first be discovered before we ask whether his teachings are true or false.

The clues to a man's thought, whenever texts and interpretations are ambiguous, lie in his logical purpose (not personal motive) and in the specific social *context* in which his doctrine arises. Whether the *truth* of those doctrines is historically conditioned is another matter which we need not discuss here. In one sense it is, and in another it isn't. But the *meaning* of the doctrines can only be grasped when we understand the purposes they serve, what it is they *oppose* and the logical consequences which follow from their assertion. As yet no critical study of Marx has been made from this point of view. No one has applied the method of historical materialism to Marx's own doctrine itself. No one has critically *evaluated* the relative weight of the available texts, traced the *development* of Marx's thought, examined the *apparent* contradictions in his writings in the light of the contrary doctrines of his different opponents, and sought to discover in this way the spirit and *rationale* of the system. The critics of Marx have generally been inspired to write their books in order to save their country from the "red terror"; and the defenders of Marx in order to hasten the revolution. Both have sought for what they needed

and found what they sought. In their eagerness to score on one another, they have not even always taken the trouble to understand Marx's *language*. I shall cite one instance of this before I go on to state my general theses. The furious discussion as to whether Marxism is a science or not has been based on the assumption that the word *Wissenschaft* in Marx always implies natural science and the *method* of natural science. This is a rank error. Where Marx uses the term *Wissenschaft* to characterize his own standpoint, he means what all the Young-Hegelians meant by the use of that term, *criticism based upon the standpoint of development*. The difference in the two meanings is enormous.

The following theses state dogmatically the general conclusions of detailed research extending over many years. They will before long be developed at length in book form.

1. *Marxism is primarily a method.* Its specific conclusions may turn out to be wrong, but unless the method used to impeach its results is different from its own, the abandonment of those particular results does not prove the inadequacy of the method. To correct Darwin's views on sexual selection by using Darwin's method is not to refute Darwinism. To refute Marx's specific views as to when and how a revolution will take place is not necessarily to invalidate his method. Orthodox Marxists as well as anti-Marxists, by refusing to distinguish between the essential method and tentative results of Marxism have revealed a common ignorance as to what scientific method means.

2. *Marxism is a method of social science or sociology.* Marx was the first to maintain the autonomy of social laws, holding that they were not reducible to laws of physics or biology. Consequently, determinism for Marx means *social* determinism not *natural* determinism. "It is not man's consciousness which determines his existence, but man's *social* existence which determines his consciousness" (my italics). The consequence of this distinction between natural and social causation is that—

2a. *Marxism is decidedly not an historical fatalism.* Were social laws to operate with the absolute necessity and irrevocability of natural laws, history would be fated and human effort unnecessary. But social laws differ from natural laws in at least two important respects: (1) they are historically conditioned, and (2) they are laws of *human* activity. Marxism states propositions about human activity (its desires, ideals, etc.) as it is affected by an historically conditioned social environment. Human effort is the mode by which the socially determined comes to pass. Those who accuse Marx of being a fatalist brazenly ignore the fact that fatalism was a doctrine which Marx vigorously opposed all his life. The belief that social laws operated with the necessity of natural laws was held by the liberal *laissez-faire* bourgeoisie who drew the consistent conclusion from it that that government was best which governed least and did not interfere with the inevitable play of economic forces. But Marx insisted that "men make their own histories." Not in any old fashion, to be sure, but within the conditioning limits of the physical, social and cultural environment. Sombart's "*zwei Seelen*" theory of Marxism which alleges a conflict between Marxism as an impersonal doctrine of social *necessity* and Marxism as a passionate movement for social *freedom*,

overlooks the fact that genuine freedom is impossible without a knowledge of what is socially determined. If everything were indeterminate, there could be no freedom.

3. *Marxism is a method of social-behaviorism.* It is not interested in the *personal motive* behind individual activity. It holds that the effects of human activities are *resultants* of the interaction of these motives with themselves and an objective environment, and that the resultant activity can be correlated with and explained by the movement of certain social factors in the environment. In other words, its concept of social causation is *statistical.* Social events of importance do not take place because this or that individual has this or that ideal, but because the movement of environmental forces continually limits the range and efficacy of those ideals and operates as a selective agency until only those ideals or alternatives remain which correspond to the genuine objective possibilities of the situation. Voluntary human activity is presupposed throughout. Yet it is the behavior and ideology of *groups* and *classes* alone which above all interest the Marxist. He seeks to understand them not in terms of the personal motivation of its individual components—which have an enormous range—but in terms of social processes that have a definite direction not *deducible* from conscious human activity. Recognition of what this direction is enables a class to set an intelligent definite goal. The goal implies a *Stellungsnahme* or vital option which is realized only because human effort is informed by the knowledge of the condition, limits and powers of man's activity in the world about him.

3a. *Psychology and Marxism.* Class consciousness as Marx used the term does *not* imply *individual* consciousness of personal interest or *mass* consciousness of community ties, but an awareness of the historical meaning and mission of the working class in the socio-economic process. "Mission" is not to be understood in a religious sense but in the sense in which we say that a man's mission is to accomplish a certain task, say, the unification of a country. The mission of the working class, according to Marx, is to bring about the *social revolution.* Assuming a definite direction and rate in the productive relations of the social order and the relative constancy of certain human behavior patterns, Marx predicted that the social revolution would take place. Not inevitably, of course, but on the condition that human desires, intelligence and will operate more or less as they have in the past. Certain psychological assumptions are here made which seem too simple to modern psychologists, who feel that Marx's purpose, *the social revolution,* is a problem to be solved by practical psychology and propaganda alone.

According to Marxism, it is quite true that the effectiveness of propaganda, its method and appeal, depends upon knowledge of practical psychology. But this knowledge is a necessary but not a sufficient condition, for the advisability of carrying on certain *kinds* of propaganda, the theoretical content and justification of that propaganda, depend upon a prior analysis of the socio-economic environment. *All* propaganda appeals to the same insight into the way human beings behave, but whether or not one should agitate, at a given time, say, for the organization of rival unions to the A. F. of L. cannot be determined on psychological grounds alone. In

other words, psychology can only tell us *how* to agitate effectively, not *what* to agitate for. The conditions and limits of psychology are to be found in man's wider social environment.

4. Civilization, for Marx, is a complex of institutions, traditions, activities, ideologies, etc., such that the understanding of any specific part involves knowledge of other parts (not all) of the culture complex. Just as a history of prices is not a history of economic organization, so an adequate history of religion (or what not) must be more than a history of religious *ideas*. Doctrines are part of social patterns.

4a. Although reciprocal influences are exerted by the various parts of a cultural whole, the clue to the cultural pattern is given by the *social relations of production,* which condition in divers ways and in varying degrees determines the rise, growth and decline (not the truth) of other forms of human relationships.

5. Consequently, the method of Marxism is one of *criticism.* Not only does it draw the consequences of a social doctrine or measure to get its meaning, but it traces its roots to a certain attitude towards the existing mode of social organization, correlates it with basic economic tendencies and class divisions, and reveals its interrelation on all levels with apparently neutral theoretical positions. In other words, Marxism attempts to lay bare those social and historical presuppositions, including the system of values, which are at the basis of cultural divisions. It denies that a presuppositionless standpoint is possible and frankly admits its own presupposition in favor of the proletariat. As soon as a relevant cultural issue has been raised, it critically reveals the *social* presuppositions of the conflicting viewpoints involved. The significance of the fact that every important work of Marx is entitled a *critique* (the sub-title of *Capital* is a "Critique of Political Economy") has never been properly grasped by the critics of Marx.

6. This criticism applied to the fundamental concepts of economics shows that social life is not an organization of *things,* but of human relations in an historical process. This process seems to substantialize these human relationships into fixed structures independent of time and human purposes. Insight into the fact that the characters of economic exchange are social rather than natural helps to destroy the "personification of things" and the thingification of persons" in contemporary society.

7. The concrete application of the method of Marx is what is generally known as the theory of historical materialism. This is not an attempt to explain the *genesis* of ideas, but rather their *acceptance* and *persistence* in relation to the conditioning social environment. The genesis of ideas in the *individual* mind is a subject for investigation on the part of the psychologist. To explain, however, the acceptance and survival of *this* idea rather than of another is the task of the sociologist. The actual degree to which this connection between ideas and class interests exists is an *empirical* matter. The more organic a culture is, the closer will the correlations be; the more dynamic it is, the more difficult will it be to establish those correlations.

7a. Marx's logical method as applied to social events must of necessity be the logic of the *process.* The Dialectic method is the only method

which can unravel the *structural interrelations of a whole in movement.* The subsidiary categories employed are "*relative totality*" which distinguishes Marx's thought from the atomism of traditional empiricism, and "human need or purpose," which marks the break with absolute idealism. From this follows the rejection of the correspondence theory of truth and the emphasis upon *practical activity* as a test of validity.

8. *Marxism teaches the indissoluble unity of theory and practice.* A social theory is not merely an abstract interpretation of processes existing independently of man, but an assertion of a point of view from which those processes are to be transformed. It maintains that social practice is really the expression of social theories, even when the latter are not avowed. Knowledge of how selective bias enters into the determination of allegedly eternal truths in social affairs is a challenge to those truths and the affairs they express. One bias is superior to another in so far as the natural objective possibilities of the situation make the practices which follow from it consistent and adequate. The meaning and test of any theory ultimately lies in its consequences for *action* (not necessarily of a narrowly practical sort); its rules are prescriptions and its propositions implicit *directions* to introduce changes in the social environment.

8a. The opposition customarily drawn between *theory* and *facts* näively assumes that facts (as distinct from things) exist in *rerum natura* and that theories must adjust themselves to something *completely* antecedent. Every scientist knows that the meaning of the so-called *crucial* fact often depends upon the theories it is supposed to test. This is not only true in the natural sciences, as anyone, for example, who has examined the geneticist's evidence for the inheritance of acquired character knows, but even more so in the social sciences which have a *valuational* basis and study social change in order to control it. This brings us to the question of—

9. *The Ethics of Marxism.* Marx's refusal to urge social reform in the name of abstract principles of justice has led to the belief that Marxism is a mechanical theory of social causation which has no place, save at the cost of a contradiction, for human activity in behalf of *ethical* values. This is a mistake. Marx opposed all natural rights doctrines and authoritarian morality of the Kantian stripe on the ground that their ethical claims had no *relevance* to social tendencies at work in the world. Marx's ethics, as well as his theory of history, were *naturalistic.* Marx's ethics is expressed in what he *wanted;* his theory of history in what he *knew.* But we have seen that what he wanted was informed by what he knew. Marx shared Hegel's insight that will, feeling and intelligence reciprocally conditioned one another, and that knowledge makes a difference by showing not only what it is that we really want, but by indicating what the probabilities are of our getting it. Marx did not denounce the Utopian socialists for having an ethics—for being socialists—but for having a *Utopian* ethics, for being, like so many revolutionary revisionists today, *muddle-headed* socialists. He criticized them for a romanticism which paraded in the guise of a common-sense rationalism, for a scientific reformism which believed that it could legislate into existence the very alternatives between which it made its choice, instead of recognizing that these alternatives were given by the socio-economic world in whose making their own

generation had no hand. What remains to be done by Marxists today is to *explicitly* formulate a theory or scale of *goods* in terms of the possibility and desirability of certain kinds of *consumption values* (including the cultural, of course,), to develop the social psychology assumed by their method and to study how both their ethics and psychology are conditioned by the environment and yet modify it in turn.

10. The economic theories of Marxism do not constitute a hypothetico-deductive system, but an implicit sociology. The central doctrine of Marx's sociological economics is the fetischism of commodities of which the theory of surplus value is an abstract and derivative expression. For Marx, political economy is not an independent discipline, but a study of the formal relations between objects which have acquired negotiable characters in the total process of social production.

11. *Marxism and Philosophy.* Although Marxism is primarily a method, it cannot be *merely* that. One goes on to ask why is Marxism as a method more effective than another; what characters does the subject matter to which the method is applied possess, in virtue of which action based upon it is successful? The philosophy of dialectical materialism is the attempt at systematic description of those fundamental characters of time, value and existence from which the categories of social and physical explanation are ultimately drawn. Marx indicated only the general outlines of such a world-view. His position may be characterized as a realistic evolutionary naturalism, strongly voluntaristic in its social implications. One may accept the fundamental doctrines of dialectical materialism without being a Marxist just as one may be a socialist without being a Marxist. But a Marxist must be both a socialist and a dialectical materialist.

The tendency to dismiss Marx's philosophy is due to the refusal to examine Marx's positions in the light of the history of modern philosophy, as Engels did in his *Feurbach.* The historical approach is not the only possible approach, but due to the special difficulties of Marx's language the best pedagogic one. And of philosophy in general it is always well to remember Marx's own caution that, "the fact that several individuals cannot stomach modern philosophy and die of philosophical indigestion proves no more against philosophy than the fact that here and there a steam boiler explodes and blows several passengers into space proves against mechanics."

This is what I conceive to be distinctive in the theory of Marxism. Whether these doctrines are consistent or true need not concern us here.[1] But whoever is acquainted with the refutations and criticisms of Marxism coming from both the left and right will realize that Marx's head never seems to be where the axe falls. It is an open question whether Marx's opponents have more violently distorted his doctrines than his orthodox friends. But as to whether both have radically misunderstood him, there seems to me to be no question at all.

[1] *Cf.* my *Philosophy of Dialectical Materialism. Journal of Philosophy,* vol. 25 (1928), p. 113.

THE DOCTRINAL CRISIS IN EASTMANISM

BY ARTHUR W. CALHOUN

IF there is any point at all in Max Eastman's strictures on Marxian "inevitability" and in his appeal for proletarian evangelism, it amounts to an attempt to revive the doctrine of the freedom of the will, which doctrine is itself a philosophy of life and hence incompatible with Eastman's repudiation of philosophy. If, however, Eastman means something else than the old voluntarism, he will have to face the fact that as a mere propaganda device "inevitability" (fatalism, if you will,) has proved to be a more compelling gospel than the milder cults of persuasive exhortation. What more compelling complex than the notion that the stars in their courses are on our side?

In all probability, Eastman's revisionism is a temperamental revulsion against an overdose of Calvinism in the Presbyterian parsonage whence he sprang. When one becomes alienated from the dour predestination of Geneva, what is more natural than that he should fall for the warm evangelism of the Methodists? If Marx is to sit in Calvin's pew in the better world, surely we may invite Max to a seat by John Wesley.

Some of us may not know as much about Marx as Eastman does, but we may surely be pardoned for questioning Eastman's assertion that Marx built on the assumption "that the mind is in its essence disinterested" and that "the motions of thought are, according to his philosophy, a mere logical reflection of the motions of matter." To be sure, something depends on just what is meant by "logical," but if I had my books unpacked I would undertake to show by chapter and verse that Marx understood well enough the queer tricks the mind plays in the process of rationalization and that he could expound to perfection the way in which group or class interests camouflage themselves in motives and ideals, thus indicating that the mind is not "disinterested" or "logical" (in any ordinary sense of the latter term).

Moreover, there can be no such sharp distinction as Eastman would draw between "the definition of fact, the goal of desire, and the plan of achieving it." The underlying urge that grows out of past experience provides individuals and groups with tastes and preferences that color their apprehension of facts about as much as they color the goals of desire; and the plans for achieving the goal are likewise colored by the background of taste growing out of experience. That is why the revolutionary working class refuses to learn its economics out of professorial text-books, to accept its goals from the mouth of the pulpiteers, or to borrow its tactics from Calhoun or Eastman.

Nor does it take its cue from "modern science" of the Eastmanian

vintage. In fact, the so-called "scientific socialism" is not scientific in the abstract, passionless, intellectualistic sense (a sense in itself unscientific because it ignores most of human nature). Marxism is "scientific" in the sense of being adapted to the stirring and informing of those interests that make for the rise and triumph of the working class. Marx was aware of this fact. In one passage in *Capital* he asks how it came that Aristotle thought the way he did on a certain point in Economics, and answers in terms of Aristotle's background and interests. The context is implicit with the confession that Marx's disagreement with Aristotle was due to the fact that Marx had a different axe to grind. In other words, the Marxian movement was an appeal to the will of the working class, and was "scientific," not in the sense of dehumanized, impersonal, abstract, worthless "truth," but in the sense of constituting a more effective appeal than Utopianism, old or new. And Eastmanism is Utopianism, however much it may profess to be "scientific," unless it admits that the rise and triumph of the working-class is not a stray idea or ideal or "cause" coming from nowhere into somebody's mind, but is rather the normal extension of the line of social development traced by the past movement of mankind.

Nor has a genuine apprehension of Marxism ever made anyone sit down and wait for the inevitable. On the contrary, it has accomplished precisely what Eastman wants to accomplish by his new scientific management—it has caught the imagination of multitudes, it has quickened their vision, it has sharpened their intelligence, it has evoked their loyalties, it has made their sweep irresistible. It is ridiculous to talk as if Marx was a mere predicter, or as if he failed to work on a "plan-of-action for achieving a desired goal that is *possible*." Eastman ought to have come across twenty years ago the story of the indefatigable socialist who, when asked why he worked so sacrificially for the cause when he knew that Socialism was inevitable, rejoined, "That's what makes it inevitable." Nor will Eastman ever get very many people to work much for a cause that does not impress them as inevitable. To work for something that is not inevitable is to work for a Utopia, and it is too late in the day to rally people in behalf of air castles.

Of course, people may be wrong in regarding the triumph of the workers as inevitable, and one may cherish misgivings even while he fights, but the vigor and power of the movement depend on the degree of assurance of victory. Hence it would be fatal to strip the workers of confidence by throwing them back on a sentimental evangelism even though this preaching were wedded with ostensibly scientific method.

The point is that Marxism, rightly understood and logically extended in the light of events since Marx's day, contains all the value that Eastman is groping after but perversely refusing to find in Marxism as recorded. If Eastman would let his mind run forward along the lines projected by Marx, he would be spared a lot of trouble. Moreover, he would avoid such duds as his remark that the revolution in Russia was "philosophically not to be expected." He ought to remember that since Marx's day the world has been bound inextricably into one by the further evolution of capitalism, so that "the field is the world" and that the

ripeness of world capitalism starts the revolution at some weak point. To say that the revolution in Russia was "philosophically not to be expected" is to think in terms of nineteenth century localized capitalism. If one thinks in twentieth century terms there is no philosophic contradiction apparent.

Why not give Marx a chance by finding out what his principles mean when applied in a real world of today? That is much more important than to ask what they mean among the cobwebs of our ante-bellum attics.

MARX AND HIS REVISERS

BY L. B. BOUDIN

THOMAS JEFFERSON said that there ought to be a revolution every twenty years. I take it that he meant to say, that every once in a while the people ought to order their affairs anew without being bound by any previously existing authority. This I believe to be an important principle of human progress whether in the domain of politics or thought. Every attempt at stock-taking in the domain of their theory should, therefore, be welcomed by all Socialists. A revision of Marxism has been long overdue—the last great revision being about thirty years old. But aside from the mere lapse of time, such a revision has been made necessary by the events of the last fifteen years, which include the World War, the Russian Revolution, and the emergence of the United States as the greatest World Power, and the so-called "new economics" upon which it is supposed to be based.

I doubt very much whether such a revision can be accomplished within the framework of such a symposium as the present one. But such a discussion may at least indicate the lines along which the work of revision ought to proceed: indicate the weaknesses of the old theoretical structure—whether of design or execution—and point to the plans or building materials to be used in the work of reconstruction.

It goes without saying that for such a discussion to be fruitful, it must not merely rehash old objections which had been put forward many times before, and answered as many times, whether satisfactorily or not—unless, of course, some really new material can be brought forward bearing upon the old disputes. In other words, in order that such a discussion may be fruitful, it must amount to a reconsideration of the Marxian theory in the light of either some new developments of science, or of some new events in the world of affairs. It might legitimately be asked, for instance: How does Marxian philosophy fare at the hands of Relativity? Or, How does the Marxian theory of history, particularly the theory of the building of socialism out of the materials developed within capitalist society, square with the communist experiment in Russia? Or, How does the Marxian theory of the inherent economic contradictions of capitalist society account for the recent economic changes in the United States? The putting of such questions, and the attempt to answer them one way or another, would be, if not necessarily enlightening, at least stimulating. Unfortunately, as far as I know at least, no such questions have been seriously put, and certainly no attempt has been made to discuss them adequately.

The reason for this is obvious. The Russians, who are engaged in the greatest world-event bearing on Marxian theory, assume that what they

are doing merely confirms the Marxian teaching, and there cannot, therefore, possibly be anything to revise on that score. The fact that most old-time Marxists disagree with them, is, to them, merely proof of how corrupt the established church had become and how urgent the need of purification. Like the Protestant Reformation, Communism is not an attempt to *revise* the old teaching, but to *restore* it. It makes no difference that in the end we may find ourselves confronted with an entirely new body of doctrine: the approach is that of the faithful, not of the critically minded. On the other hand, the purveyors of the "new economics" in the United States, do not feel called upon to revise Marx, since they honestly believe that Marx is a dead dog—if he ever was a live one—of whom no practical man is bound to take notice. And they are eminently practical men—even though they, or their followers, have lost immense fortunes in reliance on their new economic theories. There remains, therefore, only a few homeless literati, who, like Max Eastman, have, for one reason or another, lost their old moorings and cannot find contentment in either the new opiates, or in the old comforts still open to tired radicals.

I have referred to Max Eastman particularly, because he has written the only book, as far as I know, which can at all be considered a serious attempt at a revision of Marxism. His *Marx and Lenin* may be—in my opinion, it is—all wrong in its essentials, but it is an honest attempt of an inquiring mind to come to grips with some serious problems with which we are confronted today as thinking men. It does not cover the subject, by any means. Russia looms so large in his eyes that he entirely overlooks the rest of the world, including the United States of America. That is quite understandable from his point of view: He accepts the fundamentals of communism—in the Trotsky version apparently, but without understanding the radical difference between Lenin and Trotsky—and to your true Communist the United States do not matter. To those of us who do not accept communism, and who do not, therefore, see the world-revolution around the corner, the United States matter very much. But so does Russia. The relation of the Russian experiment to Marxian theory should, therefore, receive close attention; and what Eastman has to say about it in his *Marx and Lenin* is at least stimulating, if not exactly correct. But I want to emphasize the fact that no revision or stock-taking of Marxism will be complete that does not take into account both Russia and the United States—the doing of the old order as well as the attempts to establish a new one.

At first glance, one might be inclined to take my last statement for granted—and wonder whether I was not going to the unnecessary trouble of breaking into open doors. What I said sounds like a truism, but it isn't. It is in fact the statement of a program—in the sense of a definition of Marxism, and it is a program that Eastman cannot accept, if I understand his position correctly. It involves one of the fundamental points in Marxism, and one of the greatest problems in philosophy.

But here I must pause for a moment to state some of the conditions of our problem, and make a few explanations, so that the reader may know what "the shootin' " is all about.

At the close of the great revisionist controversy of 1897-1905, I summarized the position of Marxism in my *Theoretical System of Karl Marx.*

I pointed out that Marxian theory, like Gaul, is divided into three parts—philosophic, economic, and sociological. But I stressed the point that while the three parts are distinct bodies of theory, and each may be true or false irrespective of the others, in Marx's own mind the three parts formed one whole—and that his socialism rests on all three and all three are necessary to support it. And one of the problems facing any revisers of Marx is the question: How far are these three bodies of theory dependent upon one another, and how far is each necessary to support the Marxian prediction of the coming of socialism? It should be noted that the claim of Marx and his followers to the appellation of "scientific" as the hallmark of their brand of socialism is based on this ability to *predict* the coming of socialsm—or, as it is usually stated, their assertion that socialism is "inevitable."

The main feature of the Marxian philosophy is the so-called Materialist Conception of History (not Economic Interpretation of History), with its sub-theory of the Class Struggle. The main feature of his economic theory is his theory of surplus value (not the labor theory of value), with its sub-theory of the economic contractions of the capitalist system. His sociologic theory is a combination of the first two to form a theory of the Breakdown of Capitalism. I cannot, of course, go here into the various ramifications of these theories, but it will be sufficient for our purpose to point out that in so far as the Russian experiment bears upon the Marxian theory, it relates to the philosophic-historic end of it; and that, in so far as the "new economics," now or lately rampant in the United States, bears upon Marxian theory, the particular branch of that theory affected is the socio-economic.

As I have already stated, both the Russian experiment and the developments in the United States of America are full of interest, and their relation to Marxian theory ought to be carefully considered. Unfortunately, our Marx-revisers and Marx-opponents stubbornly refuse to do. Even Eastman does not do it, as we shall presently see. The others, of whom the "liberal" group congregated around our great and only "Journal of Public Opinion" are typical, either ignore Marx altogether or else refer to him in a tone of superciliousness which takes their own superior knowledge and wisdom for granted and makes real discussion of the subject quite impossible. Occasionally, as happened in that same great Journal not long ago, when some particularly ignorant collaborator makes a particularly absurd statement about Marx and Marxism, and the statement is challenged, these purveyors of enlightened public opinion refuse to be moved from their position that Marxism—good enough to be sneered at—is not good enough for serious discussion. I hope to have, at some future time, a chance to pursue this particular topic further in connection with a contemplated discussion of the "new economics" in America. This article is limited to Russia and philosophy. And so back to Eastman.

Eastman's theme, the thing that is uppermost in his mind, is the relation of the Russian Revolution to Marxian theory. The trouble is this: According to Marxian theory, socialism must come *after,* and *as the result of* capitalism. But there was practically no capitalism in Russia before 1917—at least not enough to give birth to socialism, according to orthodox Marxian theory. How shall we account for Bolshevism? And what shall

we do with this part of Marxian theory?

But does Eastman put these questions in this blunt and simple fashion, so that the question might be carefully considered, its elements bared, and a possible answer arrived at? No. Instead, he talks in vague and utterly meaningless generalities and a Hooverized jargon about "modern science," and makes utterly absurd statements about this same science and about Marxism. It would be useless to enter upon a discussion of what he is pleased to call the position of modern science, since he says nothing about it on which one can put his finger as something definite. But he does make one statement about Marxian philosophy which is both definite and important. He says that, according to Marx, the human mind is *disinterested,* and that this position is important in Marxian theory. At the very outset of his article, Eastman says:

> "He (Marx) built his philosophy of dialectic materialism upon the assumption that the mind is in its essence disinterested."

Now, this is just that much nonsense. No, it is worse than nonsense: *it is the exact reverse of the truth on a point of cardinal importance.* For it is a point of cardinal importance in Marxian philosophy that the human mind is *not* disinterested. Indeed, *this is the foundation of the entire class-struggle theory.* And since this absurd statement about Marx is the keynote of his entire present article, nothing further need be said about it.

And if I were merely a faithful knight-errant, out to smite and confound the infidel, I suppose I could stop right here without saying anything further—having shown the enemy in all his nakedness. But I am interested in a discussion of the subject quite aside from Eastman; and Eastman is an honest thinker interested in an important problem, notwithstanding his ignorance of Marxism. So the discussion must proceed.

What troubles Eastman in view of the Russian Experiment, is the problem of Natural Evolution as applied to human society versus the Human Will. Are revolutions the result of social forces, or are they made by revolutionists? If they are the result of social forces—what were the social forces that made the Bolshevik Revolution? And if there were no social forces, and the revolution was made by Lenin and his associates because they *willed* it, why can it not be willed *elsewhere, anywhere, at any time?*

This harks back to one of the most fundamental problems in philosophy—the problem of determinism versus free-will—which is a problem in Marxism as well as in any other philosophy, and quite irrespective of the Russian Experiment. Some years before the Russian Experiment, I attempted to solve the problem in a lecture delivered as part of a course of lectures on "Socialist Philosophy in Its Historical Aspects." I will not trouble the reader with my own solution of this vexed philosophic problem, but I shall repeat the statement of the problem as I then formulated it, as I believe that it bears directly on our discussion. I said:

> "The main line of battle involves our entire attitude towards the problem of social progress and social reform.
>
> "On the one hand, the idea of determinism seems to imply that nothing that man can do, can, in any way, alter or affect the predetermined course of social events. The development of society is part of a system of predeterminism which pervades the entire universe: Whatever has been predetermined will come to pass, whether we will it so or not; and whatever

> is not part of the predetermined course cannot possibly come to pass, no matter how much we will it. It would, therefore, be sheer folly, and worse than futile, to attempt to do anything in order to influence the course of social evolution. The only thing left for a true determinist to do, is to let social events drift as best they can the only way they can to their predestined end. In short, determinism is synonymous with fatalism; and is a fit philosophy only for those who have neither interest in the course of human progress, nor energy enough to feel the urge to attempt to influence that course.
>
> "On the other hand, free will implies an essential indeterminateness of things social; the negation of the idea of a developing course of human progress, and particularly of what we are wont to call the 'upward march of human evolution.' If we have absolute freedom in the choice of social action, and the course of social evolution depends on our choice, that chosen course may take us backward as well as forward. It may take us in a straight line, or it may lead us in a circle. In fact, the course of social progress may go 'any old way,' or no way at all. It may end in a *cul de sac,* or nowhere in particular. It goes without saying that such an assumption makes any kind of social science impossible. Social science, like any other science, is based on an essential *order* of things, an order which is based on certain laws, giving and determining the course of events, and making it possible to foretell that course, given a knowledge of the factors entering it."

Some of these statements need further elucidation, which they receive in the context in which they were first used. As this is not an abstract philosophical discussion, we need not enter into that. The purpose of the quotation was to pose the problem. Nor is my own solution of the problem important, except in so far as it affects the points raised by Eastman. It will, therefore, suffice to say here that the Marxian solution of the problem, as I understand that solution, and as anybody who knows anything about Marx must understand it, is that there is room in our world for both free-will (genuine free-will, which makes real choice possible, and not merely an illusory consciousness of a free-will which isn't really free), as well as *order* according to law of some sort.

But the solution of the purely philosophical problem does not dispose of the matter for Marx and the Marxists. Marx was not interested in philosophy as such. Hence his failure to write any "Philosophy," which led some academic philosophers to deny his claim to the title of philosopher. Marx's real interest was in history, human history, and particularly the history of his own times. Everything else was subsidiary to that interest. And your true Marxist has inherited that bias: Whatever else he may be, he is primarily a contemporary historian. But a contemporary historian to Marx and his followers does not mean an observer and recorder of contemporary events, but a participant therein. A "contemporary historian" in their meaning of the term is a *maker* of history, not a writer of history, and if he writes history at all it is in order to influence its further making. Fatalism having been excluded philosophically, this is followed up by excluding it historically.

The problem is, therefore, shifted to the field of history—*past* and *present:* Order *and* free-will both being there, what is their *relation?* Are they independent of each other? Do they work coöperatively? Is one subordinate to the other, and if so which is which? In other words, the philosophic problem—"Does the World order make man according to its

laws, or do men make the World according to their will?"—has become the historico-sociological problem: Does History make men and fit them into its orderly development, or do men make their own history? The Marxian answer to this question is: *Men make their own history, but only out of materials provided for them by History itself.* The way it is done is a psychological problem which Marx solved by means of his theory of the Class Struggle. I cannot go into the details of this theory, as that would require an article for itself. But let me say here that that celebrated theory contains much more than is evidently dreamed of in Eastman's philosophy. It contains an explanation of the relation of Ideas to Will, and of both to Matter, which Eastman clearly does not suspect.

In making his keynote point, Eastman says:

> "The idea is—as Schopenhauer and not Hegel guessed—secondary and subordinate to the will. And although Marx in his *Theses on Feurbach* attained a glimpse of the modern attitude, he built his philosophy of dialectic materialism upon the opposite assumption that the mind is in its essence disinterested."

I have already pointed out the absurdity of the last statement. Now let me make a further correction: the implied statement that Marx believed that the will is subordinate to the idea is equally untrue, although it is not quite as absurd as the statement that Marx believed that the mind was disinterested. But the most important thing to be noted in connection with the Marxian treatment of ideas and the will is that he was less interested in the question of the relation of ideas to the will (although he was very far from being disinterested in that question) than in the question of *where both come from.* The *genesis* of both ideas and wills is the problem that occupies his attention most of all—and it is that problem that he has attempted to solve—and in my opinion solved successfully—in the theory of the Class Struggle. And here I want to let Eastman in on another secret: In solving this problem, Marx accepted neither Hegel nor Schopenhauer, but struck out for himself in a manner which makes him in my humble opinion the greatest figure in modern psychology. The vagaries and fads of some modern psychologists aside, everything that I have seen of modern psychology merely states explicitly what was stated by Marx implicitly three-quarters to half a century ago. But modern psychologists being unfortunately brought up under the influence of an individualistic philosophy and their clinical methods being adapted only to the study of the individual, it will probably take some time before modern psychology will rise from a study of the individual to a study of the *mass,* and particularly to a study of the mass in historical motion.

The way the problem presented itself to Marx was this: Here is a body of humans which we are pleased to call the civilized world. It is in a constant ferment, all agog with excitement: There are ideas—conservative, reactionary, revolutionary. There are wills—also conservative, reactionary, and revolutionary. What is the relation of, say, the Revolutionary Ideas to the Revolutionary Will? But more important still—*where do they both come from?* The Marxian mind not being a disinterested mind, this is not mere idle curiosity on his part. And he knows it. What makes him interested in the "genetic science of psychology" is the *purpose* he

has in mind. For the Marxian mind is always *purposive—and he knows that, too,* even though the Marx critics of our "Pragmatic Era" didn't know it.

And the purpose he has in hand it to *control* the movement of a block of humans sufficiently large to affect the direction of human history. Being an engineer and not a closet-philosopher, he sets out by studying the conditions of his problem. The first question that he must answer obviously is this: Is this human world of ours a flowing river, or is it a madhouse? Are the ideas and wills that animate these humans the result of something that preceded them, either within these humans or outside of them, or do they just *happen* to be, without rhyme or reason? If this is a madhouse in which things—ideas, wills, events—just happen, that's clearly the end of the matter, there is nothing further to do about it. But if the things that happen in it—including the ideas and wills generated within it—are the result of preceding things or events, then the question arises: What are the laws which govern this sequence, and are these laws such as may be broken into by us, so as to reverse, divert, or otherwise affect, their course? If this be a flowing river, can it be made to run up the mountains instead of to the sea? And if it cannot be made to flow up the mountains, can it be dammed up so as to form a lake in some mountain valley? And if so what kind of dam must we build, and how long will the lake stay dammed? And if it must flow to the sea, must it flow in its present channel or can we divert its flow by canalizing its course? Also, is there anyway in which we may prevent its periodic disastrous overflows, or utilize its power for our purposes? And, finally, if we are satisfied with its direction, is there any way in which we may accelerate or retard the tempo of its flow to suit our purposes?

Having put to himself these questions and having studied the conditions of his problem, Marx answered, generally: This is a river and not a madhouse. It flows into the sea, and cannot be made to flow up a mountain. If the law of gravitation which makes it flow to the sea should be utilized in some way to send it into the mountains, it could only be done at a frightful cost, and would lead us nowhere in the end, for it would then remain stationary within a certain hollow in the mountains. Unless, of course, its life-giving sources should prove too strong for us, which event it would ultimately find its way to the sea in despite of us, but causing havoc and destruction in the process because of our attempt to interfere with its natural course. On the other hand, there are many things which we can do about it, for the answer to the last two questions at least must be in the affirmative.

What does Eastman think of these answers, are they satisfactory or unsatisfactory? If not, why not, and wherein not? His vague generalities say nothing and leave us nowhere. He tells oracularly that "modern science" eschews "prediction" and assumes "control"—which is another piece of nonsense. Marx worked for *control,* and said so in stentorian tones so that none but the deaf could fail to hear him. And modern science has not ceased *predicting*—whenever it does it will of necessity have to give up attempting to control, for control is based on prediction. Eastman's disclaimer of knowledge on behalf of "modern science" is, I

am sure, entirely unauthorized by that much-abused lady. Marx never claimed absolute knowledge. As is well-known to his followers—but, alas, not to his critics—he was the sworn foe of *all* absolutes. A working knowledge was good enough for him. And a "working hypothesis" looks to me for all the world like the graven image of a working knowledge. And insofar as "modern science" may be said to have given up any pretensions at all, it has done so in favor of that very philosphy which Eastman has, with so much assurance, informed us is dead and buried. I am not particularly enamoured of our ultra-modern philosophy, but good or bad she is very much alive and just now kicking up quite a row. To pronounce a funeral oration upon her just now only proves that Rip Van Winkle can go to sleep not only in the Catskills, but also in the Ural Mountains, and even in the streets of Moscow.

The truth of the matter is, however, that modern science like the flowers (if any) that bloom in gray dawn of the morning after—have nothing to do with the case. What has to do with—and is always on Eastman's mind—is the Russian Revolution, and his evident disappointment with its results. As I have already stated over and over again, the Russian Revolution is a tremendous event, and its various phases and ramifications ought to be studied very carefully, and the results carefully checked against our theoretical and tactical positions before that great event came to excite our spirits or disturb our peace. Also, people have a right to be dissatisfied with the results of that noble experiment. But, somehow, the two do not mix into one urge of revising Marx. In fact, the more one is dissatisfied with the results of the Russian Experiment, the less there would seem to be any need for a revision of pre-Bolshevist Marxism. There is, of course, the possibility of ascribing the supposed failure of Bolshevism to its sticking too much to Marx, in which event a dissatisfaction with the results of the Russian Revolution would require a revision of Marxism, or at least that part of it which survived in Bolshevism. But I could not gather that much from Eastman's vague and oracular statements about revising both Marx and Lenin. If that is Eastman's real point, I wish he would say in plain English and furnish us with a bill of particulars of *his* grievances against both Marx and Lenin. Also, if that is the case, it would evidently be absurd to revise first Marx and then Lenin. Since we are to revise Marx in the light of Lenin's errors, it is obviously important to know these first—that is, we must begin our revision with Lenin instead of Marx. Or, at least revise the two together; otherwise we shall get nowhere.

Let me illustrate by referring once again to the main point in dispute —the rôle of the *will* in history. In contrasting the "engineer" Lenin with the "philosopher" Marx on this crucial point, Eastman quotes the following from Lenin:

> "From a society in which one class exploits another *the only way out* is through the dictatorship of the proletariat . . . Marx's teaching about the class struggle leads inevitably to a recognition . . . (that) the overthrow of the bourgeoisie is *attainable only through* the transformation of the proletariat into a ruling class."

And then this from Marx:

> "The new thing that I did consisted in demonstrating . . . that the class struggle *inevitably* leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat."

Having contrasted the two statements, Eastman comments:

> "It is not a contradiction, but the difference is enormous. It is the difference between two epochs in the evolution of human intelligence."

Notwithstanding Eastman's vehement assurances, I confess that I do not see the difference. I do not say that there is none—but merely that it is not immediately apparent, and that one must read into them something more before the difference, if there be any, can become apparent. I take it that Eastman will agree with me that Lenin himself was not conscious of any difference. Of course, that does not prove that there really was no difference in their conceptions of the role of the will in history. But it does prove, I think, that the difference in statement is not apparent, and that we must know or assume something outside of that in order to make the two statements contrast rather than coincide. What are those things, and how do we know them? One of these things is something Lenin did, at least according to Eastman, (the reservation is intended not to indicate disagreement on my part, but in order not to engage in controversy with others who may disagree with him), namely, that he made a socialist revolution where Marx said it could not be done. The other is a quality of fatalism that Eastman (erroneously, as we have seen) ascribes to Marx. As conceived and corrected by Eastman, the two statements read about as follows:

> Marx: "The new thing that I did consisted in demonstrating . . . that the class struggle *inevitably* (and without the intervention of the human will) *leads* to the dictatorship of the proletariat."

> Lenin: "From a society in which one class exploits another the only way out is through the dictatorship of the exploited class. *It's up to us, comrades; let us exercise our will and institute a dictatorship of the proletariat!*"

The assumption being that when the "engineer" Lenin gave the order to build the dictatorship of the proletariat in Russia, no such undertaking was permissible under the building code promulgated by Marx. The dictatorship of the proletariat was thereupon built in violation of the Marxian Code, but the result is not a "complete success."

Query: Does Eastman believe that the lack of success was due to the violation of the Code? If not—does he believe that Lenin did not have sufficient revolutionary *will* to carry the project through? Was there any flaw in Lenin's basic plan, or did he falter in the execution?

Clearly, some more light must be thrown on these very important questions before we may tell whom we should revise, and in what order, and whether upward or downward.

In the meantime, there is other work for Marxists willing to work. In fact, there is a crying need for it. One job is some attention to what has been happening economically in these blessed United States of ours, as documented in Recent Economic Changes, theorized about in the "new economics", and foot-noted in the stock-market crash and the business "recession" which is upon us.

SOCIALISM AND VALUE

BY WALDO FRANK

MAX EASTMAN would substitute for the dialectic materialism of Marx a materialism of natural science that is still more dogmatic and a great deal farther from the truth. The terms of Marxian philosophy are indeed, as Mr. Eastman says, outmoded. The nineteenth century tried to make a god out of mechanism: the natural world was accepted as mechanism; now the human world was to be so regarded, also. But natural science is today abandoning this näive geneticism. While the Marxists go on interpreting man on the basis of certain mechanistic laws, under the belief that they are authorized by classic physics, the physicists themselves abandon mechanism for organism—and leave the historical materialists as remote from modern thought as if they had based their social theories on Ptolemy or Plotinus.

So far so good in the critique of Mr. Eastman. Yet behind this obsolete geneticism of the Marxists there is, none the less, a profound and verifiable intuition. This intuition is, that history is some sort of organism; that thought, event and fact are integral and continuous; and that the future and the past are related as parts of one organism viewed along the dimension of time. This true intuition in Marx is vastly more important than the errors of his terms. This intuition gave Marxism life, gave its followers energy and creative will, made it succeed in Russia as a way of life. This intuition, indeed, gives to Marxism its *value*. Life seen genetically in economic terms is false: but when economics is linked, as in Marxism, with a dynamic concept of life as a whole, the falseness of the particular interpretation fades before the value of the general vision.

There is, moreover, no contradiction between the philosophy of Marx and the methodology of Lenin. Mr. Eastman (like most enemies of philosophy) is so simplistic that he cannot conciliate the concept of historic necessity (Marxism) with the necessity, *within that necessity,* of the human will to determine its methods of action, to choose, to fight and to create (Leninism). The dynamism of Lenin as an engineer lies precisely in his being nurtured by the *Weltanschauung* of Marx, his intuition of life as organism *with an internal direction.* Mr. Eastman, it seems to me, is unable to understand Lenin because he rejects what is profound and true in Marx. There is no antithesis between a social engineer and a prophet. You might as well say that a bridge-builder must have *solely* a technique for forming the materials of his bridge, and no sense of the river which the bridge is to cross or of the land approaches.

And now, what does Mr. Eastman propose? We should replace the obsolete geneticism in Marx with another geneticism—despite the fact

that *all* geneticisms are obsolete: and we should rid ourselves of the all-important intuition whereby Marx integrated an economic revolutionary movement with history and with life itself. This "religious," this "philosophic" element in Marx, at which Mr. Eastman sneers, is the one life-giving, life-generating force in the world—the one value, the one verifiable truth. All human intercourse, emotional and intellectual, all æsthetic activity, are verifications of that organic unity of life which science at last, in its swift approach to the conclusion of *continuity,* is naturalizing for us into the domain of fact. This intuition in Marx is its value. This creative value inherent in economic revolution is our sole guarantee that the revolution will be creative: *i. e.,* that a world may arise from social revolution which will be a world of value. And this is what Max Eastman sneers at as "dead" and asks us to discard. Neither philosophy nor religion is dead, of course, nor will ever die so long as there are creative men in the world. What Max Eastman is really saying is that they are dead in him.

And in place of all this what does he offer? A dogmatic materialism based on certain abstracted phenomena of natural science: a materialistic dogmatism which Engels denounced as shallow, and which no leading natural scientist today believes in!

This dogmatic materialism of Mr. Eastman is basically a pluralistic pragmatism. It is a kind of philosophic opportunism. Life offers to the senses, on their own recognizance, a plurality of events. This *Erzatz* philosophic school refuses to look behind the surface of distinctions for a connecting continuity; it attacks as "fantasy" the efforts to integrate this continuity and having superstitiously ignored all evidence of *living* beyond a few reports of a few fragmentary senses (arbitrarily made the sole purveyors of reality), it reduces the complex process of life to a chaos of unilateral processes from fragmentary "causes" into equally fragmentary "results." Worse than opportunism, this pluralistic materialism is really philosophic cowardice. Listen to this: "The mind," writes Mr. Eastman, "is a mere practical apparatus for attaining ends determined by the instinctive impulses." Every human mind knows that this is nonsense, unless the words "instinctive impulses" are tortured and magnified out of their meaning, to explain the æsthetic, philosophic, and religious constructions of the mind. These behaviors are as *factual* and as immediate to experience as the mental process that makes a savage knock a cocoanut from a palm. And it is only a huddling to the shelter of the "material" and the "concrete" that makes some minds try to deny this. Moreover, if we admit with Schopenhauer and Freud and Mr. Eastman that the will predetermines ideation, we must philosophically universalize "will"—with no more justification than had Hegel with his Spirit or Aquinas with his Logos.

I agree with Mr. Eastman that the values and terms of revolutionary thought must be reformed. But I submit that it would be suicidal for a revolutionary movement to assume pragmatism or pluralism or natural-science-worship in place of the far deeper although outmoded materialism of Marx. *Literally suicidal.*

A revolution to succeed and to be worth succeeding must be a creation. It must have within it creative forces, potential values, that will grow in

the human soil which the revolutionary act turns over. As a guide or a way of life, pragmatic pluralism or "the materialism of natural science" is definitely sterile. Its dogmas are so far from the reality of life that it releases in its believers none of the energy of life. Any creative act departs, however unconsciously, from the intuition of the organic wholeness of existence. This intuition, however far from intellectual articulation, by bringing its possessor close to the organism of life endows him with life power. This is true of the painting of a picture, it is true of a dance or song, it is true even of a funny story: it is supremely true of the visions and systems which have moved man and created cultures. Past cultures, of course, have contained far more than this intuition of wholeness. Often they contained as well dogmas of division. The Christian culture is an instance. To the extent of its true intuition, it was creative; to the extent of its pluralistic and separatistic implications, it failed. The same organic intuition of life (mixed with errors of nineteenth century geneticism) was the strength of Marx and Lenin. It energized their methods and made those methods work. This intuition must be expressed in modern terms. But it must not be replaced by a rationale which, in its utter removal from and denial of, the reality of life itself, can but be a rationale of impotence.

SOCIALISM AND SCIENCE

BY HENRI DE MAN

(*Translated from the French by Frida Ilmer*)

TO request me to summarize my theories is to give me an excellent lesson in modesty, for, in doing this, I must admit that the attempt at a constructive criticism by which socialist doctrine may be adjusted to the realities of our age, still is but fragmentary and incomplete. Its achievement, I feel convinced, will not be the work of one age, nor that of one individual. Having made this reservation, I shall endeavor to condense my essential theses into half a dozen paragraphs, which I shall gladly submit to those to whom the doctrinary crisis of socialism is a matter of vital concern.

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1. *Scientific Socialism Untenable.*

It is impossible to bring about an acceptance of socialism by the aid of scientific knowledge alone. Science may give us certainty of that which is, but not of that which ought to be. No scientific process can take the place of those criteria by means of which we distinguish between conflicting tendencies and desires, and align ourselves with movements. Science can make us see reality, such as the manifestations and causes of the existing class struggle, and this experience enables us to decide upon the most effective methods of waging the struggle, but it cannot guide the choice by which we rally to one or the other of the existing social trends. Thus, every adherent of socialism must admit, if he desires to be objective, that a personal judgment of values is at the basis of all socialist doctrine. A scientific study of historical events will reveal that, at the root of this judgment, there is a personal sense of morality, justice, and dignity. Science may establish the existence of this sense and may describe its functioning, but it can neither justify it nor cause it to arise when desired.

2. *Socialism a Religion.*

The set of values that guides all socialist conviction is rooted in faith. Socialism presupposes a view of life as subordinated to social duty by the dictates of conscience, and the criteria which guide this conscience possess all the aspects of the religious emotion. Their absolute character seems to invest them with a validity superior to that of all knowledge derived by intellectual processes, for it is capable of arousing in us such emotions as the belief in an end of life that exceeds the individual, a community of thought, a desire to sacrifice, a need for collective myths and symbols, and confidence in a future in which justice will rule supreme.

3. *The General Validity of Socialist Premises.*

If we study the evolution of socialist ideas as a social phenomenon and the forming of socialist convictions as a result of individual choice, we shall find that the set of values from which they derive always implies a respect for generally accepted human values. In fact, it may be proved that moral values that inspire modern socialism have issued from a source that is the common denominator of all popular religious and philosophic beliefs. The moral basis of socialism (equality of rights, responsibilities, and rank; self-determination of the individual and of the state; the sanctity of life and the dignity of labor; the responsibility of all to the community, etc.) is the same as that of Christianity, of humanitarianism, and of democracy. When viewed with regard to its psychological sources, contemporary socialism appears as the embodiment of a moral inspiration that is uniquely concentrated and active, despite the diversity of formulas that have governed the evolution of society. Thus it may invest its theories with a validity that surpasses all class interests, since it attempts to make social institutions the actualization of moral principles that are recognized among civilized humanity throughout the world.

4. *The Place of the Class Struggle in Socialism.*

Although the ultimate end of all socialist doctrine is the protection of human life and the assurance of general welfare, it is, due to existing conditions, still chiefly concerned with the vital cares and material interests of the working class. So long as this class, which capitalism has deprived more than all others of liberty and dignity, is not sufficiently aware of its position to appreciate the material and legal terms that must govern its liberation, the socialist ideals cannot materialize. This realization, however, cannot come about in any other way than through the struggle against individual desires and the Will to Power of the vested interests. Socialism imposes upon everyone the duty to participate in this struggle and to render it as energetic and effective as possible. The struggle of the working class is not simply a matter of economic concern; the very notion of a class consciousness is nothing more than the awareness of particular duties whose fulfillment will lead to the actualization of an equitable order of society. In view of these facts, it would be more fitting to explain class consciousness as the result of a socialistic attitude, rather than to view socialism itself as the result of this consciousness. Incidentally, this approach is the only one that will insure the class struggle from being weakened by the satisfaction of material needs. It will also protect its leaders from emulating bourgeois society and its quest for power and money.

5. *Intellectual Radicalism and the Class Struggle.*

Capitalist domination is increasingly assuming the form of a moral force. This is another reason why the psychological aspect of the class struggle deserves to be emphasized. Conquered in the economic field by the syndicalist movement and in the political domain by universal suffrage,

capitalism is increasingly employing the prestige of its pretended cultural superiority to enslave the masses. It makes use of every scientific device—the school, the platform, the press, the cinema, the radio, advertising, etc.—to disseminate its ideas and sentiments, encouraging the masses to imitate the upper class, and, consequently, to adapt themselves psychologically to the dominant régime. As a result, socialist action is endangered by bourgeoisification—that is, the tendency of the proletariat to conform to the tastes and customs of their social superiors, even in such matters as the pursuit of their material needs and in their efforts to acquire political power and social prestige. In fact, even the advocates of a revolutionary seizure of power are not immune to this danger; on the contrary, their ardor often deteriorates into a desire for personal revenge which they hope to satisfy by deposing the ruling personages. It is because of this that the Jacobin or Bolshevist notion of revolution as a simple seizure of political power seems to me archaic when applied to modern European or American capitalism. Revolution is ineffectual not only because its achievement is reserved for the future, but also because it is not powerful enough. Lasting effects cannot be achieved except by a gradual, but energetic and continuous, action. Bourgeois values, which have resulted from habitual adaptation to a certain social environment, must be crushed by the workers' movement, and, within the working class itself, socialist values, the result of the spiritual revolt against that environment, must take their place.

6. *The Actual Value of Socialism.*

The only sound method by which this psychologic transformation can be effected is the participation of the masses themselves in the change of institutions. This participation, however, must be conscious; it must manifest itself consciously in a spirit of revolt against the moral and legal principles of the ruling order. Only in this manner can the working class succeed in forming new habits, emotions, and patterns of thought, as well as establishing new institutions. Indeed, socialism cannot be realized unless the socialist action can, simultaneously with the change of social institutions, also transform man and his deepest impulses.

It closely follows that we must evaluate socialism less as the plan to a political Utopia than as an actual and continuous process. If the values in which the struggle for the amelioration of immediate needs is rooted are revolutionary—in other words, inspired by a standard of values in revolt against the existing social order—then this struggle will no longer appear as a simple preparation for the revolution, but as its gradual realization. Only by means of this psychologic action may the fight of the working class for the protection of its interests and for power realize socialism. The Marxian economic evolution will hardly suffice. If socialist doctrine is to become the source of effective action, it must stress its psychologic aspects by respecting the personal will inspired in us by the sense of morality.

THE LOGIC OF LENINISM

BY SAMUEL D. SCHMALHAUSEN

DO Socialist dare deny—at least in theory—that the class struggle is the pivotal doctrine in socialist philosophy.

Excise the doctrine of the class struggle, and Socialism is no longer Marxism but shilly-shally Utopian humanitarianism.

And yet, by way of anticipation, it may be said that the true and ultimate source of the hostility between the Reds and the non-Reds traces to their conflicting appreciations of the virility and validity of the class struggle. Certain muddle-headed, or disingenuous, Socialists will deny this; it is true, nevertheless.

The famous propositions laid down in the *Communist Manifesto* (1847), that all history is the record of class struggles and that the final class struggle between the capitalists and the proletariat must be consummated in a dictatorship of the proletariat, are Marxian axioms which all loyal Socialists have accepted, at least in theory, since the time of their enunciation.

Why, then, the class war—among the Socialists?

The key to our latter-day Battle of Tacticians may be found, I believe, in a dilemma the inexorable nature of which some of the philosophers of Bolshevism have not sufficiently apprehended.

What, let us ask, had been the one outstanding difference, prior to the outbreak of the Great War, between the Czarist State and the capitalist State as represented in countries like England, France, Germany, America? Precisely this: thanks to certain pseudo-democratic practices, all the States, except the Russian, had been amenable, however inadequately, to the "will of the people." A momentous and ominous fact.

In truth, had not Marx thought it possible that a bloodless revolution might inaugurate the Socialist Commonwealth in England? And had not Engels said that "one can conceive" a peaceful development toward Socialism in "republican or very free countries," like England and America? A transition to socialism might conceivably be consummated without violence, without breaking up the old State!*

What was it that had made these conjectures even possible if it was not the improvingly "democratic" nature of the capitalist State and the increasingly powerful control being exercised over that State by the class-conscious workers?

*Decoration Day, 1929, brought the interesting news of the triumph of the Labor Forces in "Merrie England." A bloodless social (not socialist) revolution.

There was not that graphic and relentless and patent opposition between the State and the Workers which the Marxian hypothesis in its earliest formulation had postulated as prerequisite to social revolution "via" the dictatorship of the armed proletariat. Except in Czarist Russia where, because of the nature of the autocratic State, the opposition became inevitably unmitigable, unmodifiable, absolute, complete. Class war to the knife!

The dilemma in the countries outside of Russia was in substance this:

Given:

(1) a pliable State amenable to the coercive persuasions of a rising proletariat:

(2) a powerful capitalism, challenged by a rising social democracy:

(3) an industrial situation that left the still-disorganized workers at terrible odds in their struggle with the employers—on the industrial field:

(4) a socialist party whose prime duty it had become to teach the awakened workers how to improve their status, how to defeat the enemy, *i .e.,* the strategically-situated capitalist, how to "capture the State";—it was necessary for the socialist party to give the people some living evidence of its capacity to ameliorate the workers' lot:—

Problem: In the light of these conditions, how was it pragmatically possible for the socialist parties to play the game of power, *as they had to in order to prove their right to survive;* to make the race against capitalist parties for the control of the State, without going through that very historic experience of compromise, accommodation, experimental success-and-defeat which had characterized the tactics of the socialist parties during the lifetime of the ill-fated Second International, more especially in those countries where the pseudo-democratic pretences and practices of the State made it partially amenable to socialist control?

The greater percentage of purity, of revolutionary integrity, in Russian socialism was historically due, in part, to the absence of that experimental period—inevitable in the other countries—during which a class war was being waged battle by battle (in driblets!) under the auspices of a State that played the part of friendly-enemy. While the State was pliable, socialism, or what was construed as socialism, gained in power and prestige and world influence by being reformist, opportunist, political-minded, *revolutionary in inspiration, evolutionary in realization.*

The tactics of the struggle for power when the arena of competing forces is kept at least partially open and reasonably "on the square" *compels* a logic of adaptation, a logic of compromise. In revolutionary retrospect it is easy to slight this fact.

In truth, not until the pseudo-democratic pretences of the State were seen to be shams, not until the State had been won over utterly to the purposes of capitalism—the advent of Finance Imperialism heralded that surrender—was it realistically possible for socialism to perceive the wisdom of turning its back upon the bourgeois State and swinging over to the tactics of utter and open hostility, the implacable class war, revolution in the ruthless Leninist manner.

The test, therefore, of the degrees of extremism of its tactics presented itself clearly enough to the socialists of every country, but only when

capitalism, triumphant over the State—the stage of Finance Imperialism—left the class-conscious workers with one alternative, and only one: Revolution in conjunction with the dictatorship of the proletariat. That was the realistic alternative which socialism, at the outbreak of the World War, failed to adopt—to its unspeakable detriment.

Lenin's criticism speaks volumes:

> "It was a fateful thing to have confused and hushed up the question of the relation of a proletarian revolution to the State at a time when the States, with their swollen military apparatus in a whirlwind of Imperialist rivalry, had become monstrous military beasts devouring the lives of millions of people in order to decide whether England or Germany—this or that group of financial capitalists—should dominate the world."

The fact that rampant Imperialism had gained control of every European State almost two decades before the Great War—the Kautskys in every country had understood perfectly well at least a decade before the War-of-the-Imperialisms the absolute necessity of revolutionary socialism if the proletariat was to achieve its Marxian destiny—is the fact upon which the Bolshevik charge of cowardice and treason and social patriotism and evasive opportunism is significantly based.

The outbreak of the Great War revealed with lightning clarity the errors of those Socialists who had failed in due time to perceive and, perceiving, to translate into action, the fact that the advent of Finance Imperialism—the State using its military power and its diplomatic prestige and "its" conscripted people for the purposes of the exploiters—had given the death-blow to the previously plausible tactics of half-conciliatory opportunism which depended for their efficacy upon the existence of a State amenable to socialist control, at least, for example, for the achievement of full political democracy for the workers.

The historical situation in Russia both before and during the "Great" War made it more possible for the Bolsheviks to realize the error of playing the game of power with a "friendly enemy" when a stage in capitalist ascendancy had been reached which made the game of power a relentless contest between *irreconcilable* foes.

And certainly it is illuminating—and bewildering to certain Marxian scholars—that Russia, the country in which capitalism had been weakest, should be the first to achieve a communist revolution and that the United States, the country in which Capitalism has been strongest, should be the last (who can doubt it?) to achieve such a revolution!

Part of the explanation of the paradox will lie in the contrasting rôles of the State in both countries and in the differing attitudes toward that State of the masses and their leaders.

But today what reason can there be left among sincere Socialists for longer doubting and denying the necessity of considering the State the implacable enemy to be overthrown when the self-conscious proletariat is ready for the crucial struggle?

In a recent issue of *The New Freeman* (August 20, 1930) there was some editorial writing of a most illuminating kind concerning this vexing problem of the vain deluding hope of great transformations through parliamentary reforms:

> "Mr. George Bernard Shaw advises the British Labor Party to commit hara-kiri in a good cause. Under the present parliamentary system, he

> remarks, a radical Government cannot get ahead any faster than a reactionary Government. The thing, therefore, is for the Labor Party to propose a great Reform Bill which should practically reform the parliamentary system off the face of the earth. The bill would not pass, of course, and then the Labor Government should resign, and the Labor Party go off somewhere, lie down wrapped in its mantle, and die the death of the righteous. Mr. Shaw's advice is good. After the heinous course that fate has moved the Labor Government to follow in India, and considering what it will presently perhaps have to do in Afghanistan and in China, a protesting gesture like this would be very magnificent and dignified. But political parties and their Governments, when they die, never die of dignity, so we suspect that this excellent advice is wasted."

And the following surprisingly candid remarks, in a supplementary editorial, are even more bitingly relevant to the subject in hand:

> "We were particularly attracted by Mr. Shaw's remark that owing to the structural character of the parliamentary mechanism, one kind of Government can get ahead no faster than another. We take leave to think that our own country illustrates the truth of this observation even better than England does. We have long wished that the impossibilist or doctrinaire Socialists might carry a national election here, just to see what would happen—or rather, just to impress the public mind with the fact that nothing would or could happen. Just what could Mr. Norman Thomas do, as President, even if he had a majority of the Senate and House with him; even if he poisoned off all the Supreme Court justices and appointed a whole new bench, with Arthur Garfield Hays or Morris Hillquit as Chief Justice? Not a durned thing, men and brethren. Not because he would not wish to 'get ahead,' not because he would not think he could—Mr. Thomas, like his fellow-Socialists and like Mr. Ramsay MacDonald himself, is just that honest and just that näive—but because, when it came down to dots, he couldn't. All he and his party could do would be something such as Mr. Shaw recommends, and then nobly retire. The only way our political practice will ever be changed is by a course of violence, so unintelligent, so protracted and sanguinary that we would like to be excused from contemplating it."

Today, after the bitter disillusionment that the World War has wrought among the opportunist Socialists, the mark of differentiation between realistic socialism and romantic liberalism is precisely the difference in attitude toward the State: the former knows its enemy and what to do about it; the latter accepts the "friendly enemy philosophy" (inherited from the State-reverencing Socialists of the "Right") as still valid in an age of rampant Imperialism.

The valid economics of socialism in an age of Finance Imperialism must be relentless class struggle. As the Bolsheviks teach—and practice. As socialism in America, having taught, will ere long have to practice if proletarianism is ever to become more than a pious aspiration.

The self-deluding faith of a majority of Socialists of ante-bellum days in the possible realization of their brand of democracy—within the framework of the capitalist State and of its particular institutions, saturated, *in the nature of the case,* with bourgeois ideology!—is harder and harder to understand except as one bears in mind the famous error of carrying over into the era of Finance Imperialism (when the State conscripts the workers and coerces the masses for its militaristic purposes) the plausibly hopeful conception of the State born and nurtured to lusty vigor in the

"friendly enemy" days—when under Socialist pressure the State had "granted" the workers an extension of the suffrage, social legislation, "free" education, political "democracy," etc. The benevolent-paternalist State!

What could be more ironic—and more inevitable—than that Ramsay MacDonald, the pacifist-Socialist, shall be acting in the rôle of militarist-imperialist, sounding all too loudly the pathetic knell of opportunist socialism? By courageous contrast, Gandhi is a red revolutionist.

The capitalist State is the true enemy. The political method is not therefore useless or futile, as the Anarchists and Syndicalists and Single-Taxers claim. A very erroneous point of view for radical minds to champion. The political method is valuable, indispensable—so long as capitalism is in control—as a method of protest, of dramatic opposition, of merciless showing-up of the treacherous parliamentary-bourgeois State. The political method is still invaluable for undermining the political State.

What are the chief props of the capitalist State? The bureaucracy, the army, the police, the judiciary, the educational system, the church, the press. These institutions are so thoroughly soaked in middle class traditions, pretences, duplicitous practices, as to render futile at the outset any attempt to reform them or to utilize them (as the opportunist Socialists have for so long and in vain sought to do) for the purposes of *realistic* radicalism, *i. e.*, for proletarianism. The Labor Government in England has not reformed the capitalist institutions, but the capitalist institutions have deformed the Labor Government. Tragic fact and socialist fiasco!

There can be no economic and political freedom for the masses under the sovereignty, no matter how chastened and purified by Liberal hocus-pocus, of institutions hopelessly tainted with capitalist heredity.

The experience of the Commune taught the founders of realistic socialism the futility of the tactics of adaptation, the wisdom of the tactic of reconstruction, the need of the *creation* of institutions embodying purely proletarian economics and purely proletarian psychology. There is no other realistic alternative.

Against the Imperialist State must be pitted the Proletarian State which, in the revolutionary crisis, must mean a dictatorship of the proletariat inaugurated by the militant minority. What other effective alternative is there under the circumstances of a clear-cut class struggle?

How soon the Proletarian State, forcibly replacing the Capitalist State, can learn to discard the props of traditional statecraft—coercion and violence—and usher in a wholly industrialized, genuinely democratic, egalitarian society—the State in its familiar historic sense gradually "withering away"—is a concrete problem depending upon unpredictable concrete conditions.

A classless society once established, the coercive State, propped up by armed force, seeking imperialist aggrandizement, is in process of extinguishment. The ultimate ideal is a drastically democratized and humanized society, industrially grounded and administered, classless, rid once for all of exploitation and the psychology of profiteering, practicing the economic and ethics of coöperation, building a communist *common*wealth.

Well, how many of our Socialists and radicals clearly visualize, believe in, and work for, such a proletarianized society?

The ideological taint infects and corrupts our so-called revolutionary integrity and clarity. Bourgeois education, bourgeois state-reverence, bourgeois *bonhomie,* the sweet prattle of reconciliation, *bourgeois love of prestige,* especially when we belong to the Professions—these compromising attitudes corrupt our deeper loyalty. No wonder that for years before the Great War, the shrewder capitalist critics had derided the revolution-spouting Socialists as parlour-radicals. Particularly in America.

The daily commingling with bourgeois types, *the substitution of fine words for courageous deeds,* the constant appeal to bourgeois law-and-order, the vast preoccupation with votes and political power and prestige, the almost complete alienation of the Intellectuals from the bottom stratum of real proletarians, the more than half-hearted wooing of non-socialist groups, especially at election time—these tendencies and practices, all perfectly human, possibly inevitable under the circumstances (for even the reactions of Socialists are subject to economic interpretation!), have made for that dilution of revolutionary sincerity and proletarian class-consciousness from the evil effects of which the radical movement in America suffers today only too obviously.

The days of our disillusionment are upon us, have been in truth since the Bolsheviki, keeping the true faith, achieved their incredible—and genuinely proletarian—revolution. We have been taught anew the sin of shilly-shally opportunism and the miracle of iron-clad resoluteness, *the essence of which is intellectual courage.* The Bolsheviks possessed both clarity of vision and resoluteness of purpose: a genuinely revolutionary prerequisite for ushering in the new society. Lacking which, socialism remains a mere dialect robbed of its original integrity as dialectic.

Too little has been written—or thought—on the creative power of socialist revolution. The astounding achievements of the Soviet Republic in education, government, art, industry, social outlook, *human motivation,* in the clarified and concentrated *Weltanschauung* of a whole people—realized within a few concentrated years—constitute a brilliant challenge to the more plausible, but less evocative, less energizing, less radical philosophy-of-change of the step-by-step evolutionists.

John Dewey, whose cautious liberalism no one will mistake for red radicalism, after a glandularly exciting visit to Soviet Russia, writes glowingly:

> "Lenin himself expressed the idea that with the accomplishment of the Revolution the Russian situation underwent a great transformation. Before it had taken place, it was Utopian, he said, to suppose that education and voluntary coöperation could achieve anything significant. The workers had first to seize power. But when they had the reins of government in their hands, there took place 'a radical change in our point of view toward socialism. It consists in this, that formerly the center of gravity had to be placed in the political struggle and the conquest of power. Now this center of gravity is displaced in the direction of pacific cultural work. I should be ready to say that it is now moving toward intellectual work, were it not for our international relations, and the necessity of defending our position in the international system. If we neglect that phase and confine ourselves to internal economic relations, the center of gravity of our work already consists in intellectual work.' He (Lenin) went on to say that the cause of socialism is now, economically speaking, identical with that of the promotion of coöperation, and added the significant words: 'Complete coöperation is not possible without an intellectual revolution.'"

In another part of his ambivalent summary on Soviet Russia (in *The New Republic,* December 19, 1928), Dewey says:

> "In any case, it is hard not to feel a certain envy for the intellectual and educational workers in Russia; not, indeed, for their material and economic status, but because a unified religious social faith brings with it such a simplification and integration of life. 'Intellectuals' in other countries have a task that is, if they are sincere, chiefly critical; those who have identified themselves in Russia with the new order have a task that is total and constructive. They are organic members of an organic going movement."

To be sure, since Professor Dewey is by the grace of God and Yankee chromosome determination a rather tepid and pragmatical American citizen, considerably infected by complacency and the higher opportunism, it is not altogether surprising to find him writing:

> "Not being an absolutist of either type [capitalistic or communistic], I find it more instructive to regard it as an experiment whose outcome is quite undetermined, but that is, just as an experiment, by all means the most interesting one going on upon the globe—though I am quite frank to say that for selfish reasons I prefer seeing it tried in Russia rather than in my own country."

This final remark of Dewey's is one of the most flagrant bits of bourgeois revelation I have ever met with in print. Our distinguished philosopher of liberalism (let Russia do it!) has evidently taken a lesson from our clever theatrical managers who follow the creative technic of trying out the dubious show first in the hinterland among the gaping boobs and intellectual hicks . . .

Dewey, finding no bitter and ironic contradiction between being a philosopher and being an American, feels at home in "my own country." Too bad. America is urgently in need of philosophers possessed not only of intellectual clarity but more particularly of spiritual courage.

If socialism is socialism, not liberalism, it is difficult to see how the will-to-revolution can be evoked, not to say powerfully energized and rendered capable of its creative work, by a philosophy less drastic than Leninism.

> "Liberal democracy is not in itself a creative or architectural principle. What it does is to keep the arena in which contemporary forces struggle for opportunity. Among those forces our own civilization has thrown up as yet none which can compare in efficiency with the egotistic motive of private gain. In Russia a social principle has, by violence indeed, made for itself an opportunity, which it uses with masterful will. It has broken the power of wealth to control men's lives. It is acting, even when it coerces them, for the sole good of the masses. It is making, even if it be destined to overthrow, a superb monument to the human will. To evolve a victorious army from an invertebrate rabble, to rouse a lazy and apathetic nation, amid poverty and suffering, to a task which demanded an almost insane courage, to conceive the daring ambition of making a ruling caste out of young unschooled workmen, was in itself an act of audacity to which time has no parallel. Beyond the bravery of this struggle there lies a much vaster design to change the entire economic structure of this half-continent, and with it the mind of a race. There are those who believe that initiative, ambition and the creative will are evoked only by the hope of personal gain. Here is initiative, here is the will to reshape and create, on a scale to which all our civilizations together offer no parallel. Its actual achievement will be hampered by the original poverty and intellectual immaturity of Russia; it may be frustrated by the criminal enmity of western politicians.

> I will sum up what I have seen of its tendency in one sentence. It is, in a land where a feeble and dilatory civilization had touched as yet only a minute minority of a gifted population, a great and heroic attempt to shorten the dragging march of time, to bring culture to a whole nation, and to make a coöperative society, where a predatory despotism had prepared the general ruin in the act of suicide."

A Monument to the Human Will:—a fitting title to Brailsford's great summary of Bolshevist attainment! Can anyone imagine such marvelous achievements of the human will except in response to a proletarian philosophy and to a courage quintessentially Leninist?

Two forces struggle for supremacy in our contemporary world. The first I shall call the Christian Idea; the second, the Bolshevist Idea. The former is motivated by the sentiment of reconciliation; the latter by the logic of irreconcilability.

The so-called "Christian Idea" is embodied in such apparently diverse conceptions as Utopian Socialism (St. Simon, Owen); Christian Socialism (Ruskin, Morris); Liberalism (Hobson, Angel); Fabian Socialism (Webb, Shaw); Evolutionary Socialism (Bernstein, Jaurès); Reformism (MacDonald, Wells); Opportunist Socialism (Hillquit, Berger, Cahan); Humanized Capitalism (Croly, Gompers).

These various schools and systems and tendencies are all founded upon the selfsame *assumptions,* viz:

(1) the irrelevance of the Class War;
(2) The democratic nature of the State, actually or potentially;
(3) the intellectual, as opposed to the economic, basis of progress;
(4) the transcendent importance of Superior Brains (the Great Man Theory of history);
(5) the acceptance of the logic of evolution, the rejection of the logic of revolution, as the chief dynamic determinant of social progress;
(6) A faith in the all-importance of tolerance as the solvent of social antagonism;
(7) a lofty indifference to the dynamic element of Time as a vital factor in social progress.

They are not, these reconciling bourgeois brethren—in the nature of their status they can hardly be expected to be—as impatient for amelioration as are the benighted victims of social injustice whose cause they champion with so much rhetorical persuasiveness.

What I have referred to as the "Christian Idea" in modern life—the cult of Sweetness and Light—is rather charmingly expressed in this utterance of H. G. Wells:

> "In England, toleration has become an institution, and where Tory and Socialist, bishop and infidel, can all meet at the same table and spend an agreeable week-end together there is no need for defensive segregations."

No need for defensive segregations! This pretty wisdom was pronounced before the Great War. These reconciling bourgeois brethren have held the center of the stage for a hundred years, more or less. Thy have focussed their powerful attention upon the reformation of capitalism through the Christian instrumentalities of sweetness and light; much more sweetness and immeasurably more light.

Hence the reconciling media of arbitration, discussion, statistical summary, investigation, publicity, open-mindedness—the said reconciling media

being employed over and over again in every local and specific crisis (the class war in driblets!). The grand result? The net gain to Progress? Let the World War be their most eloquent spokesman. Finance Imperialism universally rampant and regnant! *The sentiment of reconciliation has somehow failed to reconcile.*

The Christian Idea—the sentiment of reconciliation—has been a grotesque failure (of good and often enlightened intention) because it has attempted the impossibilist task of reconciling the fundamentally irreconcilable.

Against that sentiment of reconciliation working, of necessity, within the framework of an incorrigible capitalism preaching a futile wisdom to a self-deluded people, stands the more ruthless, that is, the more intellectually and morally sincere and courageous, Idea of Bolshevism, sprung from the inescapable logic of irreconcilability.

And those among the radicals who render more than lip-loyalty to Marxian Socialism will understand perfectly well how necessary it is to frame clear answers to such urgent questions as: Do we believe in liberalism or in communism? Are there any other realistic methods (than the Leninist) of ushering in a *proletarian, i. e.*, genuinely socialistic, régime? Specifically, what are they? Is it tactically wise or unwise to agitate in favor of a dictatorship of the proletariat in America? What is our unequivocal attitude toward the problem of the State, the technique of class struggle, the function of the militant minority, the rôle of the intellectuals, the strategy of direct action, the possibility of socialist revolution? What, in short, are the Socialists, as contra-distinguished from the non-revolutionary and the counter-revolutionary forces in America, hoping to do to realize their original (Marxian!) dream of a coöperative commonwealth? Perhaps we should begin *de novo* and ask ourselves two drastically fundamental questions: What is Socialism? What is it *not?*

We must set ourselves the herculean task of *weaning workingmen's minds from loyalty to the Christian-Capitalist-Imperialist State.* No force in contemporary society is equal to that work-of-disintegration except revolutionary socialism.

There are a few revolutionary propositions—Marxian axioms—that it may be well to recall:

> "Universal suffrage is an index of the maturity of the working class; it cannot, and never will, give anything more in the present State." (Engels.)
>
> "The lower middle-class democrats such as our Social Revolutionaries and Mensheviks and also their twin brothers, the Social Chauvinists and opportunists of Western Europe, all expect a 'great deal' from universal suffrage. They themselves think and instill into the minds of the people the wrong idea that universal suffrage in the 'present State' is really capable of expressing the will of the majority of the laboring classes and of securing its realization." (Lenin.)
>
> "The lower middle-class democrats, these sham Socialists who have replaced the class war by dreams of harmony between classes, have imagined even the transition of socialism, in a dream, as it were—that is, not in the form of the overthrow of the supremacy of the exploiting class, but in the form of the peaceful submission of the minority to the fully enlightened majority. This lower middle-class Utopia, indis-

solubly connected with the vision of a State above classes, in practice led to the betrayal of the interests of the toiling classes, as was shown, for example, in the history of the Revolutions of 1848 and 1871, and in that of 'Socialist' participation in bourgeois Ministries in England, France, Italy, and other countries, at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries." (Lenin.)

"Between capitalist and communist society, there lies a period of revolutionary transformation from the former to the latter. A stage of political transition corresponds to this period, and the State during this period can be no other than the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat." (Marx.)

"The main thing is, whether we are still to have the old machinery of government, saturated through and through with routine and inertia, and connected by thousands of threads with the capitalist class: or shall it be broken up and replaced by something altogether new? The essence of revolution is not that a new class shall govern by means of the old governmental machinery, but that it shall smash up this machinery and govern by means of a new machine." (Lenin.)

"In the highest phase of communist society, after the disappearance of the enslavement of man caused by his subjection to the principle of division of labour; when, together with this, the opposition between brain and manual worker will have disappeared; when labour will have ceased to be a mere means of supporting life and will itself have become one of the first necessities of life; when, with the all-around development of the individual, the productive forces, too, will have grown to maturity, and all the forces of social wealth will be pouring an uninterrupted torrent—only then will it be possible wholly to pass beyond the narrow horizon of bourgeois laws, and only then will Society be able to inscribe on its banner: 'From each according to his ability; to each according to his needs.'" (Marx.)

Leninism is the mood of the disillusioned who, cleansed of the follies and duplicities of a socialism fornicating with liberalism, will know how to render a sincere allegiance to revolutionary socialism, the only kind of radicalism potent to shatter the authority and pretences of Christian-Capitalist-Imperialism.

And from their revolutionary faith the younger generation of radicals, unpolluted by the subtle and treacherous opportunist wisdom of a spiritually bankrupt generation, will draw the inspiration they will require for Bolshevizing the *status quo*.

In the immortal words of Thorstein Veblen, America's profoundest economist, "Bolshevism Is A Menace—To Whom?"

There are some minor points of considerable significance that are worth while discussing, or at least precipitating, in connection with the general theme of Marxism as it is embodied in the form of Leninism.

The very fact that the concept of Leninism has become so vital a part of latter-day revolutionary thinking strikes me as being an item of the first magnitude. If Marxism were sufficient as a philosophy of social transformation, the term Leninism could hardly have achieved the great status, in theory and in practice, it now holds among revolutionary socialists. The great proposition in Marx which has had to be ignored for Leninism

to triumph is the famous proposition:

> "No type of social structure ever perishes until there have been developed all the productive forces for which it has room; and new and higher forces of production never appear on the scene until the material conditions of existence requisite for their development have matured within the womb of the old society. That is why mankind never sets itself any tasks which it is not able to perform, for when we look closely into the matter, we shall always find that the demand for the new enterprise only arises when the material conditions of existence are ripe for its successful performance—or at any rate have begun to ripen." (This is quoted in Plekhanov's *Fundamental Problems of Marxism*, pp. 49 and 50.)

By one of those ironies in the subtle process of history for the advent of which no theory, however brilliant, can ever be adequately prepared, the Marxian technique for engineering a proletarian revolution has been startlingly successful precisely in that country where all the practical conditions (state of capitalist production, extent of class consciousness, realistic possibilities of socialist transformation) were only in an embryonic stage of development; where, in truth, the agricultural situation was overwhelmingly more real than the industrial; where a seventeenth century mentality, religious, illiterate, non-urban, unscientific, was in general charge of life. If the Marxian proposition quoted above had been scripturally followed by the Bolshevik philosophers of reality, I can't see how a proletarian revolution could have had the slightest chance of being either undertaken or so successfully manipulated.

Interestingly enough, we behold before our very astonished eyes the marvelous spread of communistic sentiment and communistic revolutionary technique in China, which can hardly be said to have fulfilled the Marxian requirement for capitalistic ripeness of the productive process.

> "No type of social structure ever perishes until there have been developed all the productive forces for which it has room; and new and higher forces of production never appear on the scene until the material conditions of existence requisite for their development have matured within the womb of the old society."

Leninism is the powerful concept that corrects once for all the evolutionary bias of this classic Marxian proposition, and reveals the wisdom of taking chances on history, when those chances are desperately present—regardless of theoretic purity of dogma.

There are three first-rate additions to our knowledge of social process since Marx enunciated his fertile ideas. I refer to the theory of borrowing which cultural anthropology has in recent years illuminated, accounting in a new way for the swift transition, for example of Japan, from a feudal to a rather full-fledged modern state (and culture). If it were necessary for every cultural area in the world to undergo every phase and process of capitalistic development—with its infinite costs in the torture of the working class—before there were the remotest possibility of a proletarian revolution's success, the outlook for Bolshevism would at this tragic moment in the world's affairs be very dim indeed.

It is clearer than daylight now that the Soviet conception of government and of life will get its first remarkable development in lands where capitalism has not achieved those triumphs of power and propaganda and

insidious corruption of the mind of the working class which are the visible obstructions to socialist revolution in the ripest of all the capitalisms, the United States. No one doubts any longer that the last of the modern capitalistic states the revolutionary engineer can count on for Bolshevization is our own bourgeois paradise, America.

The second addition to our new knowledge of social process is the infinite importance of key industries and key personalities in the management of the industrial machine. Lenin shrewdly and courageously leaped beyond Marx in his acceptance and adoption of the technique and psychology underlying the most advanced contemporary "scientific management" of industry. Hence his faith in science, in its quick magical power to transform social relations in the desired Marxian direction (under Leninist auspices). Hence, also, his faith in the power of small, dedicated, intellectually competent, scientifically trained, minorities to precipitate a Marxian revolution and to manage ably the introduction of communism into any modern state.

The third new bit of knowledge that has come to us is from the field of psychology in its more dynamic psychoanalytic aspects, by the aid of which we may now clearly understand not only the immeasurable importance of the personal equation in all thinking and planning and acting, but what is just as significant, the deep-rooted reasons for the contradictions, failures, shifting currents of loyalty, margins of irrationality, surprising miscarriages of idealism, with which every liberal and radical and revolutionary movement is cluttered up, whether in Europe or in America.

I should say, then, that Leninism is a necessary and fruitful corrective of some of the major propositions in Marxian sociology and psychology. Leninism stresses to the point of extremist fanaticism the function of the will in social transformation. Quote what you will to disprove it, the historic fact remains that Marxism left the impression in millions of socialist minds of a kind of almost fatalistic determinism in social process, a theory of evolution-by-necessity that reduced human will to a secondary place in the scheme of things. Lenin—himself perhaps the greatest Will that history has known—lifted the function of will to first place in social transformation.

I am not surprised that we have all become accustomed to speaking of Marx *and* Lenin. The "and Lenin" constitutes the difference between Socialism and Bolshevism, between the Second Internationale and the Third, between Germany and Russia; in short, between socialism loyal to an evolutionary rhythm of change, and socialism dedicated to a revolutionary rhythm of change. Nor could Marxism have yielded so beautifully to the coercive persuasions of Leninism were it not for the new dominance of technology and science and psychology.

Marxism is a remarkable commentary on the possibilities of social process. Leninism is, in addition, a marvellous commentary on the possibilities of human nature.

Which leads us to a painful realization of why in these ultra-capitalistic United States, not only radicals and revolutionists but even pale liberals are in a state of despair and demoralization because of the recur-

rent frustration and throw-back of even their most mild conceptions of change. We see—if our eyes are not color-blind—how large a rôle is played in social process by the psychological factor. The purely economic conditions in this country are both from a Marxian and a simple Socialist point of view sufficiently "ripe" for a social, if not a revolutionary socialist, transformation of state and industry. The primary difficulties in the way of that desirable change are all psychologic in nature: (1) an incorrigible individualistic frame of mind among the underlying masses who aspire to be capitalists, to get rich, to leave their class; (2) the terrific corruption of mentality engendered daily by the newspapers, the movies, the school system, the theological way of thought; (3) the lowbrow hostility to thought, to profound ways of life, to sincere and significant experiments with reality . . .

What other reason is there for the new significance of propaganda in all lands if it be not the sudden realization (since The Great War and The Greater Peace) of the power of the idea, the almost unbelievable relevancy of the psychology of persuasion and suggestion and subtle coercion of the human mind—which is mostly mindless?

And how can we deny, as profound believers in communist culture, that radicalism in each of its embodiments (whether De Leonism, I. W. W.ism, Socialism, Communism) has succeeded so badly in the United States because the psychological factors in human behavior have been most blindly ignored by leaders and followers?

One point more before closing: How shall we ever understand (by means of economic interpretation alone) the easy willingness of masses of workers everywhere to respond with enthusiasm to capitalistic war—put over by the devices and appeals and compulsions of patriotic nationalism—while turning two deaf ears to the more rational logic of class struggle?

If we have in mind the exploited masses, we can show from every point of view that it is more greatly to their interest to stand by class war as against the nationalistic slaughter. Not only is the cost in life immeasurably greater in any first-class modern capitalistic war; every ideal and hope that motivates the masses in their more intelligent moments has a chance of fulfillment only by means of class struggle, and the best chance of defeat in imperialist war—and yet the masses everywhere have been led into an infinite agony by a pathetic disloyalty to the logic of Bolshevism and an incredible loyalty to the logic of Capitalist-Imperialism.

Leninism is the one realistic way out of the dirty dilemma precipitated by capitalism in its insane rivalry of imperialisms. Leninism is a profound corrective for Marxism in the direction of a greater continuing emphasis on action and will, leadership and discipline, technology and scientific management, communization under the guidance and compulsion and cultural wisdom of talented minorities.

We need in complacent and conformist America, above all things, intellectual and psychological and ideological revolutions—before any significant revolutionary changes can take place "in reality."

IOAN NADEJDE

SOCIALISM IN RUMANIA IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

BY B. LIBER

IOAN NADEJDE died in the spring of 1929.

Just now these words mean nothing, neither in his own country, nor abroad. His name has been wiped out from almost all memories.

But the revolutionists of Rumania of thirty, forty and fifty years ago and the Marxian theoreticians of those days in other European countries were not only familiar with Nadejde, but laid the greatest hopes in him.

He was one of the founders and the principal leader of the socialist movement of a backward country adjoining Tzarist Russia.

All generous young Rumanians and Rumanian Jews, all those with revolutionary, idealist tendencies and with a deep feeling of justice and perhaps an exaggerated sensitiveness for everything that seemed unjust, were Nadejde's admirers and followers.

At the age of fifteen I was a writer and speaker and contributor to the socialist press.

I met Nadejde when I returned from Paris. I was a mere high school boy, while he, probably not far from the forties, was famous and had already a long past of liberal and radical activity behind himself. We worked together for several years, first in Jassy, then in Bucharest, until I was locked up in jail. After my liberation I went to Vienna, where I finished my studies and never returned to Rumania.

Tall, large, broad-shouldered, with his almost black face and irregular, thin beard, with his eternal glasses covering a pair of very myopic and bulging eyes which very few people have ever seen, he towered over his audience and all his friends and comrades. Walking fast, with long strides in the street, he looked down upon the multitude of his pupils, some adults and some half-children, who accompanied him everywhere, actually running after him with tiny steps, as if he were their Jesus.

It was said that through his radicalism he had lost his position as a college professor, a sacrifice which endeared him even more to his close and distant friends. Of course, at that time, in our youth, nobody could have imagined that not so many years later he would deny his life-long ideal and sacrifice his opinions for a fat, bourgeois, reactionary and directly anti-socialist Government office.

But, then, how many of those who began with me and under the leadership of Nadejde their careers as devoted teachers and apostles of the working class remained true to their ideal to the end of their lives? Of the hundreds of intellectuals and intelligent workingmen and labor leaders who were known to me, I do not think that ten of those who are yet alive are still faithful to themselves.

The first socialist movement in Rumania began about fifty years ago. It was an exotic plant as far as Rumania was concerned, transplanted by generous hands and so carefully nurtured that it soon would have blossomed, contributing to the lifting of the moral and intellectual level of the country. But, uprooted by ruthless hands and neglected and betrayed by the very gardeners who had first cultivated it, it was dead thirty years ago. It left but a few sprouts, so few and so weak as to be incapable of living, and it vegetated for years until the present modern socialism and later communism were revived under the leadership of the Bulgarian Rakovsky, who afterwards became a Bolshevik celebrity in Russia, and other self-sacrificing leaders.

The city of Jassy, in former times the Athens of Rumania, was at the height of its economic and intellectual prosperity. This favorable ground facilitated much the task of the first propagandists. Without exaggerating the value of the "good old times," a comparison of the spirit of the Rumanian youth of that period with the spirit prevailing among the later younger generations shows such a great change that one is astonished to find that such a decadence is possible. One wonders how the idealism of those days could have undergone such a complete transformation in favor of the material tendencies of today.

The older generations, up to as late as 1890-1895, constituted an élite which cherished the most noble sentiments and the liveliest interest for every intellectual movement. A fresh bit of verse from the pen of a celebrated poet became the topic of spirited and brilliant conversations. People stayed up nights to discuss science. In this atmosphere of intellectual communion, of enthusiasm for all the great, generous and humanitarian causes, bonds of friendship were welded, spirits were fortified, and a grandiose future was being prepared. In this atmosphere the socialist and libertarian movement was born and, in its turn, it contributed to render still richer and more fertile this exceptionally favorable terrain; indeed, in certain respects it was entirely responsible for creating it.

The most noteworthy act of the first socialists was the publication of the magazine *Contimporanul,* which gathered around itself the most intelligent and most cultured of the disciples of the new cause.

This magazine, the contribution of which cannot be overlooked in any impartial history of Rumania, had a great influence upon the better minds of that period and it may be maintained that even many of the intellectuals of the next generation owed their development to it, many even their social position, no matter how high that may have been. *Contimporanul* made its readers think, opened their eyes to a new world in the realms of science, literature, economics, sociology, and stirred a hitherto unknown current of thoughts, leading and educating the educated.

However, the socialists could not limit themselves to theory. They looked with envy upon the progress realized by their foreign comrades; they felt the need of imitating them, of winning over, as the latter had done, the working people. But here they met with their first stumbling-block. In Rumania there were only very few laborers in the Occidental sense of the term. The great majority of the poorer Rumanian population was then, and still is, composed of peasants and agricultural laborers.

Having no other material within reach, the socialists, generously forgetting the boundaries of the possible, directed their efforts toward the peasants. It was a socialism of sentimentality that first gave rise to the practical movement, to the political struggle. It was the heart, not the reason, that guided the leaders of the new party. They argued as follows: "The majority of the peasants suffer because they are subject to the great landed proprietors. We will enlighten the peasants as to the cause of their ills, and they will swell our ranks. With these fresh forces at our command, we will have the power to save the oppressed."

But the Rumanian socialists gave a false form to this line of reasoning. Instead of adapting socialism to the conditions existing in their country, they took over bodily the formulæ from abroad and left them unchanged. And, what was worse, the socialists themselves mingled but little with the peasants, and wondered why the latter did not come to them.

In Rumania, a rich and middle merchant class in the Western sense did not begin to form until after 1848, and only toward the end of the nineteenth century did it assume the shape and characteristics of the bourgeoisie of the historically more advanced countries of the West. But the Rumanian middle class could not resemble the other in every respect, since in an agricultural country the social differences are less accentuated, and the lines of demarcation between classes less abrupt, owing to much overlapping between the social extremes.

In the city the workmen employed in small shops aspired to become in turn small shop-owners, and this was not a very difficult matter. The small proprietors, the humble traders, the owners of tumble-down houses, the employees in the service of the State, all lived and worked under great difficulties and in disorderly fashion. They worked harder than organized labor abroad and almost invariably earned less; many lived in terrible poverty, but were too proud to permit themselves to be confused with mere workers. It was ever their hope to "arrive."

It could not be expected, then, that these petty bourgeois would participate in a movement intended to overturn the existing social order, of which they were the most reactionary defenders. And as to the peasants, some of whom were landowners, and some of whom possessed nothing but hoped to get the much-needed land, they could not conceive of a social organization without private property. But even those peasants who, as virtual serfs or peons of the landed proprietors, to whom they had become "indebted" for a long course of years, lived mostly in a condition of poverty inconceivable abroad, were inaccessible to the new ideas. And the absolute ignorance and isolation in which they were kept did not permit them to grasp what the socialists wished to convey to them. The latter, in fact, soon became aware that they could not draft from the country the material which they required.

While much theorizing was still being done, while supporters were being sought and the road was being carefully tried out first in one direction and then in another, there was one section of the population which, attracted by the fair promises, by the torch of a new freedom, of a much desired equality and lured by their eternal dream of emancipation, drew constantly closer to socialism. This section was the Jewish

population.

The wealth of the Jews is proverbial in all countries, except in Rumania. There were some wealthy Rumanian Jews. Some time ago a few of them occupied strong positions even among the richest of the country. But they could be counted on the fingers of two hands only, which certainly means little among nearly one-half million. In the higher bourgoisie the Jewish element has always been very poorly represented; the bulk belonged to the lower and lowest bourgeoisie, of which they were the most active and important factor. But later the special Rumanian laws directed against the Jews, the anti-Semitic administrative measures and the general anti-Semitic current of feeling created in the Rumanian middle classes, had as a result an upheaval of the Jews as a whole and made them accessible to any liberating ideas, mainly to socialism and Zionism or to a mixture of both. Poverty contributed its share to bring them down to one common level; thus, the well-to-do bourgeois became bourgeois of slender means, and from this condition they rapidly sank into the proletariat; in fact, the largest part of the Jewish petty bourgeoisie was proletarized, that is as proletarized as they could be in a country like Rumania. This condition did not at first obtain except for the Jews.

It was from this section of the population that the first workmen of the new factories and shops were recruited. If you add to this the fact that scarcely any of the Jews were illiterate, that they were in the average more intelligent than the other elements, that they suffered more keenly than the Rumanians of the same social level, it will readily be understood why the Jews responded so quickly to the call of the Socialists and why the latter immediately accepted them.

And the Jews for their part were happy to be cordially received by the new party. Prohibited from participating in any political activity, they had everything to gain by enlisting in the army of the most liberal ideas. Furthermore, the reasons which impelled them to join were not always the same for them all. Most of the intellectual Jews lent their support without necessarily figuring how their interests might be benefited thereby. It was a fine and generous cause, and this was sufficient for them. Others, of course, had interested motives; they thought that socialism was the only solution to the Semitic question. The Jewish workers joined, above all, because of the promise of improvements in their lot as workers. Perhaps, intermingled with all these motives, there was the natural inclination of the Jews to take part in some public and political life which was entirely closed to them, as citizenship was denied to all of them, and for which they could find no outlet except through socialism. And then there was their desire to do something for the country that they really and often dearly loved, but which they were forbidden to serve politically. In addition to all this, there was unquestionably the Jewish fondness for revolutionary ideas and for internationalism, as it is well known that the truest Jewish nationalism is internationalism. Even those Jews who took no part in the socialist movement were interested in it and followed its progress attentively, hoping to benefit from it later on, when the Jewish question should be brought before the Rumanian Parliament by the socialist party.

The Jewish element was the soul and body of the party; it was also an admirable vehicle which spread its ideas and fought for them. The Jews could not attract the peasants, but influenced the city inhabitants and the suburbs of the cities. The Rumanian, non-Jewish workmen, who started to multiply as a class, imitated their Jewish colleagues, learned from them, although they never came in large numbers. And thus was formed the Rumanian Socialist Party which the leader, Ioan Nadejde, who had become a Marxian and an admirer of the Germans, christened *Partidul Socialdemocrat Romîn* (Rumanian Social-Democratic Party).

It is not my purpose to describe the details of the movement; that would be of small interest to Americans.

In almost every city or town we had a "club" (The Workers' Club), a social hall where the workers and sympathizers gathered once or several times a week to listen to our speakers. The club was the center of the local movement; all the organizations of the different trades had their headquarters there. It was there that the lectures on political, scientific and generally educational subjects were held; also literary and artistic evenings, debates and meetings of strikers. In almost all the clubs there was a library, which the members always consulted much. In certain localities, country clubs were also formed for the peasants, but in general the latter were very poorly represented in the movement.

The first socialist conventions, assembled in an atmosphere of great enthusiasm, were very interesting and fixed a general program resembling that advocated by all socialist parties in the entire world, followed by a minimum program reduced to demands which were shared by the then existing democratic party, being consequently petty-bourgeois in nature.

May 1st was observed, particularly between 1890 and 1896, by enormous masses of workers and sympathizers. From the point of view of numbers, the processions held at Bucharest were most imposing, and the demonstrations were only prohibited once under a conservative Government.

Among the trade unions which the party formed should be mentioned those of the printers, shoemakers, tailors and carpenters. Strikes were also called, either for increase in wages or for shorter working days, but over half of these strikes resulted in complete defeat of the workers. Except in the last few years, the socialist party participated in the elections, and this was one of its great errors. Since the Jews, even the native ones or those who were more or less assimilated for generations, had no right to vote, and since the peasants had only an indirect vote, and the Rumanian population as a whole had never heard of socialism, our party always cut a ridiculous figure on such occasions. And this our leaders did not see; they took for realities visions that were but their wishes.

For a very brief period Ioan Nadejde was elected a member of the Chamber of Deputies. But for a number of years, there was only one socialist in our Parliament: V. G. Mortzun. However, he did not owe his election to socialist votes; he was the representative of the intellectuals and small bourgeoisie of a provincial town and was sent to Parliament only by virtue of his engaging personality and his popularity. This did

not prevent Mortzun from becoming the sole champion of a sort of half-capitalistic-socialist ideas in the Chamber. He was all the more valuable through his rare gifts as a speaker. However, even he forgot his socialism later when he surrendered to capitalism and entered the Government.

The movement, besides the official branches of the party, comprised a number of "circles" for social studies, centers of propaganda, literary clubs, schools for adults, chapters among college students, and so on. All of them were dominated by sincerity, devotion, enthusiasm. We all resembled religious fanatics, a condition so characteristic of all young movements. We were soon joined by the most interesting individuals of the country. Even among the humbler comrades there were some admirable and original types. Of course, we had our victims and martyrs.

The greatest fights of our party were those directed against militarism and for universal suffrage.

The man who waged the fiercest battle against militarism was the great satirical writer, Anton Bacalbasha, a fine writer and at the same time an excellent speaker. But he died very young.

To propagate the idea of universal suffrage, our party held very frequent public meetings in all the big cities. This was done independently, and it was only later, when it became evident that alone no progress was possible, that the socialists organized the League of Universal Suffrage, in which many Democrats and Liberals of the extreme left were enrolled.

But as certain half-bourgeois elements did not wish to accept universal suffrage as formulated by our party, the socialist leaders abandoned their fundamental principles, compromised and began to admit into the league many liberals who wanted only a less restricted suffrage than the one prevailing. Every day long lists of new recruits of the league were published, but the success was only fictitious, since the majority of the new members were opposed to real universal suffrage, while others gave their consent without any conviction whatsoever and without feeling the necessity for the electoral reform. Little by little the interest in the league waned and very soon the new organization disintegrated completely, thus preluding the death of the socialist party.

During the last few years of the party's existence, there was only a single voice representing the league and the idea of universal suffrage, that of Mortzun, who in the *Camera* seized every opportunity, and especially that which came at the occasion of the discussions during the reply to the speech from the Throne, to recall again and again the necessity of electoral reform.

He finally succeeded in bringing to his point of view some forty members of the House. But later, when the edifice of our movement crumbled, this success was swept away under the ruins, together with others.

The Liberal party, a frankly bourgeois organization, also adopted universal suffrage as an "ideal," but it never demonstrated its will to carry it into effect.

A painful moment for the socialist party was when confronted with the Jewish question. During the early days of the movement, when the general program was fixed, it professed not to recognize a Jewish question at all. The socialists, in demanding "universal suffrage for all persons,

not subject to another State, born in Rumania, without distinction of sex, religion or nationality," believed that with this alone the problem would be solved. But subsequently, when it became apparent that it was indispensable to take a definite and separate stand on the question, a plank was adopted in the platform dealing separately with the question of the native, Rumanian Jews. A demand was made for "rights of citizenship for all Jews born in Rumania, not subject to another government, and who had performed their military service in the army."

But this satisfaction granted to the Jews remained on paper only. Never did the party undertake a direct campaign to fight for the rights of the Jews and against the anti-Jewish injustices. And what is more astonishing is that for a long time the Jews who were members of the party never demanded any action from their socialist leaders. Like the theoreticians of the party, they had formulated the following doctrine, which was taken from the general theories of socialism, without questioning themselves as to whether it fitted the conditions obtaining among us: "There are in the world only two classes of people, the exploiters and the exploited. The exploiters know no brothers either from a religious or from a national point of view. They are organized to oppose the interests of the proletariat. Therefore, the latter must unite, forgetting all the differences which separate them, and act together in defense against bourgeois exploitation. And if someone says to the workers that they have nationalistic or religious interests, he lies; he only wishes to deceive them in order to separate them; he is the enemy of the proletariat."

In appearance the policy of the party was consequent and faithful to this doctrine. But from the very beginning it was evident that, within the party, the Jews were treated as people of a somewhat lower status. Never were they elected to any really high and important function in the party, in spite of their great faith and incessant activity. The truth of the matter was that some of the leaders, including the chief, Ioan Nadejde, were anti-Semites at heart and needed the energies, the monies and the intelligence of the Jews as stepping stones for possible further successes. But at that time no one would have thought of such a thing. Within the party it was constantly repeated that the conspicuous posts should be reserved for the non-Jews, just as if the bourgeoisie did not know that the majority of our members was composed of Jews.

The Jews who became members gave their all to the party and for the time being demanded nothing for themselves. But gradually they began to see that they had been deceived, and that they had been put to work without reaping any advantage. Moreover, the leaders began to betray their cause. In the League for Universal Suffrage anti-Semitic members were admitted, who subscribed to the electoral reform but with the exclusion of the Jews. And in the inner circles of our party it was declared that that was of no importance, provided the reform were once obtained, considering that the Rumanian peasants and workers would then send their representatives who, it was hoped, would be socialists, to Parliament, and that once in Parliament it would be an easy matter to take up and solve the Jewish question.

While these matters were under discussion, a large section of the Jewish

socialists declared themselves against this bargain, and organized themselves into a minority group under the leadership of a very energetic young man, who later became well known under the name of Dr. Gelehrter, still active, at this writing, as a socialist in Bucharest. There is no doubt that this schism was largely responsible for the death of the entire movement.

It must be stated in passing that this was not the first trouble which occurred in the party. Other mistakes, though less serious, also contributed to its final disintegration.

Among the various misunderstandings dividing the party—ignoring the personal fights among some of its leaders, which were devoid of importance—I will refer here only to the lack of confidence of the workers toward the intellectuals. These were feared and despised by the real working people because some bourgeois socialists had abandoned the party and, in reward for a good position, had passed over to the adversaries' camps. The workers generalized, and distrusted all the intellectuals. In fact, this attitude and later quarrel assumed such proportions that the word "intellectual" became equivalent to an insult. Therefore, the educated members, not wishing to alienate the laboring masses, which had been won to the cause under great difficulties, permitted themselves to be maltreated and even insulted, exaggerating their tolerance to the point of always letting the workers have their own way—this to such an extent that any act or decision was legitimate and acceptable provided that it had been committed or taken by a worker. Gradually these tendencies of aversion between workers and intellectuals became more and more accentuated, and, without causing a visible separation, contributed nevertheless to a weakening of the ardor and faith of the initial years. The work became less intense, and this factor, in conjunction with other causes, led slowly but surely toward inertia, indifference and death.

The new minority movement of Jassy, called the "*Lumina*" (Light) group very soon gathered quite a large following among the Jewish socialists. Its creed could be summed up as follows: "Since to obtain universal suffrage you socialists collaborate with the Rumanian bourgeoisie, you could just as well join the Jewish bourgeois to settle the Jewish question. Furthemore, the Jewish problem—lack of citizenship and civil rights of the native Jews—is more urgent than the demand for universal suffrage, in the first place because the latter will not be granted very soon, and in the second place because once the Jews, who are largely liberal-minded, acquire the rights of citizenship, the obtaining of universal suffrage will be a very easy matter. Aud, furthermore, if you succeed in acquiring the electoral reform, what guarantee have we that you will be disposed or able to do anything for us in the direction of procuring naturalization for the Jews? Since we as Jews have our own interests, we are forming a group apart. You are Rumanian socialists and we are Jewish socialists."

These declarations raised a tempest in our poor, storm-tossed party, already so badly wrecked by the attacks from without and the dissensions from within. However, not all the Jewish socialists replied to the call of alarm of the rebels. The majority of those of Bucharest remained

loyal to the old leaders, an allegiance which merely served to prolong a bit further the death struggle of the party.

For the sake of impartiality I must add that the Rumanian leaders of the Center were favorable to an action directed toward getting citizenship rights for the Jews. In fact, the socialists of the Center were those who organized the Jews into the important association "*Drepturile*" (Rights), with a numerous membership all over the country, a society which subsequently became the common meeting-ground both for the official socialists and the agitators of Jassy, the so-called "*Luministi.*"

It is superfluous to add that this organization showed no practical results, unless we consider the fact that its agitation provoked anti-Jewish demonstrations everywhere and violence attended by bloodshed on the part of the Anti-Semites.

Toward the end of its life, when the socialist party, abandoned by several of its most influential members, played out and incapable of struggling, had reached the stage where it functioned only nominally, a ray of hope illuminated for a brief moment the oncoming shadows of our political twilight, but unfortunately it was destined to end very sadly.

One of the contributors to the official daily socialist organ, *Lumea Noua* (The New World), a student with the name Ficshinescu, together with the business manager of the same paper, the veteran Banghereanu, an ex-mechanic, a man of calm and logical temperament and profoundly devoted to the cause, started on their own account an intense propaganda among the peasants in a southern rural district, an agitation which, surprisingly, was crowned with unexpected success. Within a short time all the towns and villages of that region had their socialist "clubs."

Of course, as soon as the Government saw that those peasants were really becoming socialists and threatened to send to the communal councils representatives prepared to defend their interests, it immediately closed the clubs and threw the more intelligent of its leaders into prison. An important trial ensued. The accused consisted of representatives of all the villages involved and of the two agitators from Bucharest, Banghereanu and Ficschinescu, a total of thirty-eight. Can you image the charge trumped up against them by the State? No, you would never guess it, so absurd, cowardly and shameless it was. They were accused not of agitation, but of fraud and theft, the pretext being that "their propaganda was intended to swindle money out of the peasants," because all the members were requested to contribute small voluntary sums for the upkeep of the "clubs" which were managed by themselves.

This trial shows the injustice of the Rumanian "justice." It was conducted in silence, and no one protested except the socialists, who by that time had become too weak and insignificant for their protest to have any effect. Most of the accused peasants, after having been held for a long time in jail, were sentenced at last to several more months of prison. The two heroes of the drama were condemned to a year and a half!

The prisoners, discouraged at the failure of the socialist party to rise effectively in the defense of what was perhaps the only real peasant movement of those days, underwent their punishment with anger, seeing that their suffering had served no purpose. Finally, on leaving prison,

they found the field deserted and beheld merely the corpse of the party for which they had endured so much misery.

The writer of these lines is perhaps one of a very small number of persons or maybe the only one living who happened to be thoroughly informed about this trial. I was then in the army and, after a famous military trial and nine months in jail, had to finish my service in a southern monotonous town where, being considered dangerously revolutionary, I could be supervised and where, as it was thought, I was unable to do any mischief. But the local military authorities were too stupid and ignorant to discover my activities both among the peasants and among the peasant-soldiers. At a given moment I was able to manœuver my chiefs to let me be a part of the guard that took over the prisoners of the above-named trial when they arrived at the railroad station and to lead them to jail. Later I also arranged matters so that I could be among the soldiers who watched them in the specially improvised jail, as the town possessed no sufficient civil police for such a huge crowd of "criminals." Naturally, I rendered my friends all the kind services they needed and served as a connecting link between them and the free world.

But this is not all. The Government wished to be sure of the situation. It had only to clench its fists to crush the final remains of the party. It raided the big Bucharest "club" and illegally confiscated all its papers, books and valuable membership lists, so that they were able to punish many socialists, but as to the Jewish socialists it simply expelled a large number of them from the country, although almost all were born there and had lived there for many generations.

Nothing was left of the party. The remaining Jews were partly "*Luministi*" and partly they feared to meddle in anything whatever, since they could very easily be driven out of the country. The Rumanian so-called "socialist" workers who were attached to socialism by only a very tenuous thread, also took to flight. The leaders themselves soon went in hiding, and, after a little while, almost all of them passed to the enemy, enrolling themselves into the bourgeois parties and declaring openly that they had erred.

Then the bulk of the Rumanian Socialist workers quickly renounced all struggle. Some of them even became Jew-haters and Jew-baiters, in which respect they probably merely changed from Anti-Semitic socialists to plain Anti-Semites. It was this group that gave birth to the association of Rumanian "artisans," an organization which later had such bad effects on the Jewish workmen, since it was to the agitation of this society that the Jews owed the famous law regarding trades, which contributed to render the situation of the Jewish workers impossible in Rumania.

The majority of the socialist leaders entered the bourgeois "Liberal" party. They sacrificed their ideas, believing, or pretending to believe, that in this way they might obtain democratic reforms. In reality, they got nothing but personal favors. They were easily elected to the Chamber of Deputies and, far from getting concessions benefiting the workers, they approved acts and voted for laws which they had formerly condemned.

Ioan Nadejde, the former leader of the socialist party, declared pub-

licly through the press that he deplored having fought so many years for the socialist cause, which, he said, "had no reason to exist in Rumania, whereas the bourgeois 'Liberal' party is the sole salvation of the country."

There remained but the theorist of the party, the learned Dobrogeanu-Gherea, one of the greatest literary men of the country, who never renounced socialism, and who in a famous debate with Nadejde showed that socialism could very well thrive in Rumania if its leaders were devoted to it and knew how to adjust its theories to local conditions. Gherea was a Russian Jew who, for years, helped the Nihilist movement by smuggling into Russia prohibited revolutionary literature through Dobrogea, that province of Rumania which extends its marshy lands between the Danube and the Black Sea. But eventually he settled in Rumania, through a ruse became naturalized and lived there to the end of his days, leaving, among other members of his family, a son who is at this writing in jail, as one of the communist leaders of the country.

Constantin Mille, one of the old leaders of the party, profited by the propaganda carried on by the two agitators of whom I spoke above. He soon became the sole heir of this last socialist effort. He was elected by the enlightened southern peasants as their representative in the Chamber, but, of course, not on the socialist platform, but under some "democratic" principles, independently of the official political parties.

This history of the Rumanian socialist movement before the advent of the twentieth century was written from memory, without documents at hand, during my stay in Vienna, toward the end of my medical studies, for an Italian socialist magazine, *Il Socialismo*, edited by Enrico Ferri in Milan, and published there in 1903. I have translated it now, with some changes, for the present purpose.

In Vienna, besides some periods of starvation, I also had comparatively prosperous years, especially when I was the correspondent of an important daily and wrote for German papers and magazines. Therefore, I was known as a journalist. And when I visited Venice, as a delegate to the Congress of the then well-known Students' International Association "*Corda Fratres*," a number of progressive writers insisted that I contribute something about Rumanian socialism, which was unknown in Italy. Hence my article sent to Enrico Ferri.

It was about 1890 when, 15 years old, I returned or rather was unwillingly taken back to Rumania from abroad where, after my upbringing in Paris, I had traveled. As related above, as soon as I met Nadejde I became an enthusiastic socialist, that is I adopted his socialism and transformed it into a *credo* of my own, as I had done in childhood with religion, melting Judaism, Catholicism, Protestantism and the Asiatic religions into a beautiful new belief of my own, which rapidly evaporated into atheism.

I saw the misery of the enslaved Rumanian peasants and the extreme poverty of the city workers and wanted to educate them and free them from the clutches of their irresponsible oppressors.

The social and economic philosophy which I created for my own use soon became intimately related with anarchism and, a few years later, when more interested in Jewish life, with a peculiar, non-chauvinistic, non-militant, generous nationalism.

I had had a fertile background for my social ideas abroad. In Paris, the city of great revolutions, the echo of past upheavals was still in everybody's ears. There were old people who remembered 1848 and some even 1833. And in the Belleville quarter, where I lived, many eyewitnesses told me the story of the Commune in 1871 and of its gruesome suppression. A few of its most famous actors were still alive and easy to meet. I saw General Eudes dressed in the characteristic worker's blue blouse, and stood in awe before him. A few houses away was a meeting hall where Louise Michel, the sweet but energetic Red Virgin, often spoke, and, although children were not allowed to enter, I, short and slim, was able to slip in unnoticed among the huge crowds. And I frequently walked to the *Père-Lachaise* Cemetery and dreamed for hours in front of the famous *Mur des Federes,* where the remaining heroes of the Commune had made a last stand and died heroically.

At Jassy we were young boys and went to high school, which, of course, did not correspond to the American secondary school, but was much more advanced. We, the revolutionists in the class, kept separated from the rest, from the average, because they did not understand us. Active in the movement, visiting the "Club" regularly and sitting on the same benches with peasants and workers. Always reading, discussing among ourselves philosophy, history, literature, politics, social questions. All under the wings of the great leader, Nadejde, under his influence. Our dreams were endless. We were often impatient to sleep, fearing that the social revolution might happen during the night and we might miss it. As soon as we heard a wise word, an intelligent question from the mouth of a worker or from a peasant, that is from one really dressed in peasant costume, we danced for joy and we saw the revolution with certainty. And we were ready to die for it—truly, sincerely, literally—we meant it earnestly and honestly. Almost all of us were poor and hated the rich. Some of our group, those who belonged to middle-class families, would have, without a shadow of a doubt, tied their parents and relatives hand and feet and surrendered them to the revolutionary authorities, if such existed. They would have confiscated the family fortunes and handed them to their beloved movement. In some instances, money actually passed from houses to workers' organizations. And all of us, even the poorest, contributed all we could. I was probably the most indigent and, although I liked decent clothes, I preferred to wear torn ones and gave away a large share of the meagre earnings received from my French lessons and other tutoring work. Once, listening to music at a friend's house, I remembered that in that very minute the workers were enslaved and I had no right to be enraptured by what I loved so much, I had no right to luxury while others were starving—and I quickly left and went to the socialist meeting.

A composition was given to the class—to write about "Winter." Each one described the winter season in his own way. I spoke about the poor, the naked, the hungry, in the cold. Another wrote about the difficulty of making a revolution in the winter. A third one, the most talented of the bunch, who later became a well-known poet, composed a long poem full of sarcasm against the dominant social system. And so forth.

We were called to the school directorate. A long conference ensued. All our teachers were assembled. Cries, insults, against us. We defended ourselves, we protested, we made fiery speeches. And when we were asked who were our authorities, the poet replied: "Why, Marx, Engels, Bakunin, Liber (meaning me)!" But, as we heard the chorus of laughter from among the professors we all announced with enthusiasm: "Ioan Nadejde!" and our adversaries immediately became serious and silent. They hated him, but respected him.

Two days later. Proud, in the name of the suspended students, representing the martyrs for the great idea, for the social revolution, I went to see our Master, Ioan Nadejde. My heart beats like a hammer. I am timid. To see him, to see him alone, privately, not in the Workers' Club, not as a speaker! I could not find him home. I found him in a café. He was sitting and drinking, drinking with great appetite and fast—large, fat, tall glass jugs of beer, several of which were standing already empty near him on the table.

Great disillusionment. All so different from what I had imagined. My Jesus, my God, should never have lived that way. However, I pardoned him that.

But a still greater disappointment followed. After listening to my story, instead of praising us, instead of considering us as heroes, he spilled cold water on my enthusiasm. He moralized, showed how badly we acted, and demanded—yes, unbelievable but true, actually demanded—that we go to our principal and ask for pardon, so that he might reinstate us.

It was preposterous and none of us followed his advice.

That was my first rebellion against the great revolutionary leader and it showed me his true face.

The next time I visited the Workers' Club and looked at his framed picture hanging on the wall near that of Marx—both drawn by myself—I felt disgusted, ashamed and enraged at the idea that the wise people who had warned me to keep away from Nadejde might be right, after all.

It was about that time that I wrote my first socialist article, which was printed in the party weekly *Munca* (Labor) appearing in Bucharest. For that I was reprimanded both by one of my professors and by Nadejde. The first one thought that I had no business to get free tuition in a Government school while I attacked the Government and the system that it represented. The latter, while praising my article, advised me not to write till I finished my studies and had been graduated.

Of course, I listened to neither of them. I continued to write, but my articles were published under a pen-name. I also had short stories and dramatic descriptions of the life of the peasants, which I knew from my summer work as tutor in the country homes of wealthy owners of large farms and exploiters of many peasants. Nadejde used to speak highly of these articles, without knowing their author.

A year or two later, in Bucharest, when the official socialist daily *Lumea Noua,* whose editor was Nadejde himself, published an anonymous article by me describing school conditions, and when the school authorities threatened the paper, our chief, upon learning the identity of the

author of that article, rebuked me again severely. He knew that all my contentions were true, but wished to avoid trouble and warned me that it was unwise for me to fight the school at a time when I was so close to my final examinations for the degree of "bachelor of science and letters."

I never obeyed him. During my entire school life I was feverishly active. Of course, I had to earn a living. Besides studying, I gave many private lessons and was teaching classes. But my public and party work absorbed me entirely. Writing almost every day and under all sorts of names—Banatzeanu, Bucur, etc.—for the paper and often literary stuff for the weekly supplement; speaking at workers' meetings; organizing students' social study circles; busy with trade union work; being librarian of a large socialist library; teaching classes in popular science, literature, art; going out to the Gypsies' camps and preaching socialism to them; going to homes of workingmen and out-of-town peasants' villages to solicit votes for my party, as at that time I still believed in the value of the electoral campaign. Nadejde not only stopped discouraging me, but seeing how beloved I was everywhere, how useful my work was and how eagerly my articles were read, encouraged me greatly, invited me to write more and more. Once, even, when he was ill and unable to continue his advanced course on Marxism for students, he asked me to replace him, as he knew that I was well able to do it—and I did it successfully. Moreover, he was partly instrumental in that I was elected secretary of the largest socialist workers' club in Bucharest, a position of great responsibility, which I filled for a long time to everybody's satisfaction. But when, at one time, through his influence, I was sent as a delegate to the national convention of the socialist party, as representing my "club," I resigned. I felt like doing hard work modestly, but somehow I disliked to be too much in the limelight.

But there were other clashes between Nadejde and myself.

Once it was on account of Rakovsky and his wife, both at that time young and obscure Bulgarian students of medicine in France—the same Rakovsky who later, after I had gone definitely abroad, never to return, and after Nadejde's complete abandonment of the socialist movement in Rumania, reorganized it and became its energetic leader and who, still later, was the great Bolshevik statesman in Russia until his enforced exile to Siberia.

I wanted to publish an interview with Rakovsky on conditions in France, soon after the latter left Bucharest and after he had been well received by Nadejde. But the chief refused to print it in the paper, considering it as "too revolutionary."

An anti-Jewish movement in Bucharest, extensive pogroms against the Jews. At the same occasion an attack uuon the socialist center, the Workers' Club, the headquarters of radicalism, my headquarters.

Instead of rushing to bring help to my parents' house, or to the Jewish streets, I went to the Club, organized its defense, fortified it, and I, a physically insignificant boy, stood at its entrance leading to the street, at the head of a band of about one hundred people, ready to receive the mob of thousands of enemies with my iron bar and, if need be, to sacrifice my life.

But Nadejde who, on that day, was quietly at home, called me to his desk the next day and admonished me. I had put the Club in danger. Through my recklessness I had attracted the invaders and, if it had not been for the police, the Club, where the office of the paper happened to be also, would have been wrecked.

Then he resented my impartiality to other radical movements. He was dogmatic, conservative, intolerant. Therefore, when I allowed both Mushoiu and Zosin, the leading Anarchists, to speak at our Club, he was incensed, and a discussion arose which was continued in the paper for some time. I did not know then that the anarchists for whom I was fighting, as well as others, could also be dogmatic and intolerant, as I learned in later years.

I must say that at that time I was already influenced by anarchism. At the age of seventeen, suddenly longing for my old and beloved Paris, I left Bucharest and all my duties and returned to the French capital, where I stayed again for half a year. I, of course, left penniless and arrived penniless. I walked, hiked, sometimes hoboing, sometimes accompanying the *Wanderburschen* through Germany and stopping at the various *Herbergen zur Heimat,* where one paid one pfennig for a night's lodging; sometimes getting a job as a leader of a freight train of cattle or sheep (I was not a vegetarian as yet); sometimes living a few days by giving lessons in French or Latin to a young girl or boy student or by coaching them in other subjects. While thus wandering I reflected much, and lost my faith in socialism, and later, while warming my mind in the spiritual sun of Paris and imbibing its beauties, I became acquainted with anarchism. For some time I was under the spell of Clemenceau whom I admired greatly and who, in those days, was not far from the anarchist philosophy. But I was particularly impressed by the then famous trial of the anarchist Emile Henry and his wonderful speech before the jury. Coming back to Rumania for the second time, I brought with me new thoughts which, while not entirely ripe, helped me to see life in a new light and, by and by, rendered me somewhat lukewarm in my work for socialism. Nevertheless, I continued my activity both in the movement and as an educator of the workers.

But later came my trial and my prison days, at which occasion Nadejde actually showed himself as a true and mean traitor.

I was about 21 years old and serving in the army, in the field artillery. Being a university student, I had to serve six months only instead of three years. I was well treated and personally I had nothing to complain of. But once I was sent for ten days to military jail for a minor offense, particularly for lack of discipline to a lieutenant, instructor in equitation. When I left the jail I described in *Lumea Noua* in a long series of articles the horrible conditions prevailing in that place and the treatment or rather mistreatment of the peasant soldiers in the army as a whole. There were facts, undeniable facts, injustices, cruelties. Of course, I did not sign my name. The paper made a hit. Everybody bought it. But the military authorities did not like my articles because every word in them was true. They also understood that they could not have been written by anybody but a soldier who knew the soldiers' life from the inside. As soon as they suspected me they had me arrested. But they had no proofs

and I might have been acquitted, especially because one of the editors of our paper, a friend of mine, a civilian, took the entire blame upon himself. However, I felt that, denying my guilt, I was paralyzed and unable to speak freely before the martial court. Nor could I accept a situation in which somebody else, although not in military service, might have suffered through me. Therefore, I confessed and became the accuser instead of the accused. I was condemned to prison for six months for "insult of his superiors through the press," which together with my three months served previously to the trial, confined me for nine months. The treatment was mean, nay, barbarous. For many a day I had to stay in a three by six feet, completely dark, room, with heavy chains on my feet and hands, with nothing to eat but bread and water and in exchange eaten up by myriads of bugs creeping all over me.

The trial had made a sensation. My picture was on the front page of the newspapers and over it large headings announcing the details of the proceedings, which were elaborately described. Through the walls of my prison I could hear the loud demonstrations in the street in my favor. And each time I was marched between soldiers with fixed bayonets from jail to court, working people and students accompanied our convoy, jeered my guardians and cheered me. I was often received with revolutionary songs by the crowds. I suffered intensely, but I was happy. And, weak and slim and sickly and undernourished from my entire life of poverty as I was at the time, the only thing that kept me alive was my strong belief in the cause that I represented, that inner sunshine, my ideal.

But how did Nadejde treat me? Called as a witness, he testified against me. He declared—yes, in the face of these army officers, he declared—unsolicited and of his own accord that I had been too revolutionary even in the socialist ranks, that I had associated with anarchists, that I had brought in notorious anarchists as speakers in the Workers' Club, and so on. This volunteered information amounted to a denunciation which helped my enemies to condemn me. Moreover, he did all he could to blacken my name within the party itself. He spread the false information that I had kissed the hands of the captain who was the warden of my prison—I who had been suffering so much within its walls on account of my independent character and unyielding behavior! Nadejde, as I learned later, also whispered to my comrades that I had applied for a pardon to the King—I who refused to sign such an application presented to me by friends who implored me to "have pity on myself!"

Nadejde, when not intimately known, seemed to be a great man, a detached soul, towering spiritually, as he did physically, high above the common herd. He was not a very good speaker, but he commanded respect. His oratory was simple, without poetry, couched in the most popular language. He was not mentally brilliant, but was extremely well informed—some rightfully called him a walking encyclopedia. And he was a hard and prolific worker. His face was not a beauty, but his smile was winning. Whoever knew him closely soon discovered his hypocritical and meaner sides.

In the end the inner man in him came to the surface and the hero who was the Messiah of an entire generation of bright and hopeful youths fizzled out into nothing and left us all beaten and ashamed.

SOMEWHERE, THIS

Trees standing in rain;
Footfalls on the pavement, feet crushing leaves;
A little girl leaving her home;
The moon, barely to be seen, shining dully in the gray sky;
A cry from somewhere;
A man scolding his wife, and being heard outside;
A man going into a library;
A shout from somewhere.
"Chicken I want," says someone near.
"O, what do I care!" says a girl.
"He loves me, I'm sure," says a girl.
"What the hell do I care!" says a boy.
"What did he do then?" asks a man.
The elevated comes roaring by.
Rain falls quietly.
It is cold.
It grows darker.
In the library nearby are books of history.
"My, my, what shall I do?" asks a girl.
"That's what he died of," says a young man.
"He was in the war," says a girl.
"She's the prettiest girl I know," says someone.
The elevated can now be hardly heard; it is roaring elsewhere.
Water falls from the trees.
"O, what do I care!" says a girl.
"I love her," says a boy of a girl.

"Whoo, that's rich!" says a young man.

A good dirty story is being told.

A man worries about the money he has.

The elevated comes roaring by somewhere else.

"O, hell, no!" says someone.

The moon now can hardly be seen.

"I like poetry," says a girl near the library.

"O, what do you care?" says a girl to a girl.

"It's such a long time," says a girl.

An elevated goes roaring by.

"O, my, my, what shall I do?" says someone.

The elevated goes roaring by elsewhere.

"Isn't he crazy?" says a girl, giggling.

"Who in hell cares?" says a young man.

"No, I didn't see the newspaper this morning," says someone.

"He better had pay me," says someone.

"Who put out the lights?" asks a man.

A boy and girl are together.

A man and woman are together.

What is that girl thinking of?

What are the meals in that house, with the lights on in the first and fourth floors?

Lights come up in the second floor, too.

The lights in the second floor of another house are out.

Men and women, boys and girls, are on the streets and in houses.

It is later now; it is after seven.

It is raining very thinly.

It is cold.

The elevated goes roaring by and it is later still.

The moon can hardly be seen.

It is later.

O, it is later.

—Eli Siegel.

NEGRO WEDDING (A Drawing) Isidora Newman

D. H. LAWRENCE:

A STUDY IN HIS OWN TERMS

BY HERBERT S. SCHWARTZ

LAWRENCE was a man who loathed abstraction and yet passionately needed it. The little that he permitted himself was crystallized late in his career and it, beneath the surface, was more a confession of necessity than actual indulgence. Yet his attitude in this matter reveals much: just as a man discloses the nature of his experience by his generalizations, he implies it by a stubborn refusal to generalize. As it happens, Lawrence helps by furnishing the reasons for his refusal.

He has left two books of theory, or rather compromise with theory, *Psychoanalysis and the Unconscious*[1] and *Fantasia of the Unconscious*,[2] the first largely incorporated in the second. In the introduction to the *Fantasia* he says: "I do not believe in evolution, but in the strangeness and rainbow-change of ever renewed creative civilizations." That is the keynote of his "belief." But in a poem written towards the end[3] this belief is no longer satisfactory

> "Must we hold on, hold on
> and go ahead with what is human nature
> and make a new job of the human world?
>
> Or can we let it go?
> O, can we let it go,
> and leave it to some nature that is more than human
> to use the sperm of what's worth while in us
> and thus eliminate us?
> is the time come for humans
> now to begin to disappear . . . "

The statement in the *Fantasia* and the poem show a consistency, but this consistency depends on a meaning which is not explicit. When Lawrence says "creative civilizations," it is not easy to see what he means. Actually I do not think he is very much concerned with civilizations and so, to get himself concerned with them he must make them creative, since creation is his primary interest. "Creative" refers to the kind of experience which Lawrence encourages in himself and recommends to others. That experience is, in essence, a "strangeness" and "rainbow-change." The consistency to which I referred would require the quotation from the *Fantasia* to be revised as follows: "I do not believe in evolution, but in the strangeness and rainbow-change of ever renewed creative *experi-*

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[1] *Seltzer.* 1921.
[2] *Seltzer.* 1922.
[3] *To Let Go Or Hold On. Pansies.* Knopf. 1929.

ences." Reading the poem in this light, what Lawrence says amounts to this: "It's pretty hard for us, as we are, to have the kind of experiences that I'm advocating. Even I am having a hard time managing it. Well, if we can't have newness as we are, maybe we can get it by eliminating us altogether. But, damn it, then, *we* wouldn't be getting the new experiences.

> "Is the best that we are but sperm, loose sperm, like the sperm of fishes
> That drifts upon time and chaos, till some unknown future takes it up
> And is fecund with a new Day of new creatures? different from us . . ."

That is, Lawrence, in this poem, is making a cosmology of his personal faith of newness in experience. Not only does he recommend it to us, he postulates it of God. If we can't be making ourselves eternally new, then God will do it by eliminating us. But Lawrence cannot accept even this cosmology of his own making. He, after all, has succeeded to some degree in making himself undergo rainbow-changes. Perhaps others will follow him. We've got to have people in my own image, says Lawrence. If we can't, we'll eliminate people as they are and have them in God's image which is mine anyway. I'd hate to go myself—but anything for the realization of humanity (*i. e.*, Lawrence).

This interpretation, ungenerous as it seems, is necessitated by a close examination of the poem and the essay. It is the only way they can be reconciled (and this poem is typical). Remembering Lawrence's "belief in the strangeness and rainbow-change of ever renewed creative civilizations," one is amazed at his despair in the thought of human oblivion. The new experience in a poem involves no conflict for Lawrence, even if it contradicts the one before. But when this attitude is expanded to the scale of the universe, grave questions come up. In his own life Lawrence remains Lawrence, however much he abandons himself to change. Change in the human race eliminates Lawrence absolutely. His despair is the artist's despair in an attitude towards himself and humanity which contradicts his major impulses when it is enlarged to realize its intrinsic meaning. Otherwise it is senseless. He believes in the revolutionary changes of civilizations, but he cannot tell if they are taking place or not:

> "Only, O Destiny,
> I wish you'd show your hand."[4]

If they can be taking place imperceptibly, how can they be revolutionary? What is the basis of this belief? About the past we know too little, and our corruption in Lawrence's own terms bears little relation to the corruption of the ichthyosaurus of which he speaks in the same poem. If ours is the corruption of the mind, what has that to do with the extinction of an animal whose mind never interfered with the operation of the lower, self-sufficient centers?

Everything points to an extension of Lawrence's personal experiences and beliefs as the source of his belief in revolutionary changes of creative civilizations.

In such matters there can be nothing final. An intepretation of what a man says must appeal to a sense of reasonableness. It must justify itself by revealing more, and more consistently, than any other interpretation. It rests on the assumption that, however chaotic and impetuous

[4] *Destiny* from *Pansies*. Knopf, 1929.

a poet's mind, it obeys laws of order whose motive is the acceptability of his experience. The critic must admit the poet's need for fusing his self-assertiveness with an orderly and therefore acceptable arrangement of his experience. The poet may fail in achieving this, but unless the critic discerns the motivation, he cannot discuss the success or the failure since he himself has failed.

The whole matter of evolution, or revolution, is, in itself, unimportant here. The poem is valuable for what it tells us about Lawrence, not about civilization. Just as he tries to understand animals and even vegetation by projecting himself into them, just as he tries to understand his own characters by ignoring (as far as possible) what they do and say and leaping into their viscera, he tries to understand the universe by projecting himself into it. The result is that, more than anyone else I can think of, he gives us an admirable opportunity of understanding the writer—and a correspondingly meager opportunity of understanding anything else through what he writes.

Thus the poem from which I have quoted states a problem rather than a solution, a problem not for us but for Lawrence: How can I adapt my experience within myself to the universe if, when I do, I who am so essential to that experience, may utterly disappear? The answer is that he cannot: under the microscope, the defects of his attitude, so far as it may be called one, stand out so large that they alone are seen. The poem throws Lawrence back into himself with a bang. In fact, so does everything else that he has written. In avoiding abstraction, he avoided all continuity outside of himself.

Abstraction would show a persistent element in change. But that sameness was sterility to Lawrence, mere hypostatization. Reality was therefore to be sought in utter newness which denied anything in common. Such an attitude may encourage prolific experience, as it did in Lawrence, but it is, ultimately, no attitude at all. For Lawrence it meant that he took on more than he could bear and eliminated what he needed.

This dependence on himself for whatever order he brought to his experience was very real knowledge to Lawrence. Religion, even, was an experience within himself. To communicate it he tried to project himself into God. But this projection, like the projection into the universe, could not be successful. Lawrence must pit the "man," *i. e.*, Lawrence, against the spiritual abstraction which he, as a man, cannot understand.

> "I am a man, and therefore my heart beats, and throws the dark blood
> from side to side
> All the time I am lifted up.
> Yes, even during my uplifting,
> If it ceases I should be no longer man
> As I am, if my heart in uplifting ceased to beat, to toss the dark blood
> from side to side, causing my *myriad secret streams*. [Italics mine.]
> After the cessation
> I might be a soul in bliss, an angel approximating to the Uplifted;
> But that is another matter;
> I am Matthew, the man,
> I am not that other angelic matter."[5]

[5] *St. Matthew. Collected Poems.* Cape and Smith. 1929.

It is not so important here that Lawrence in the flesh, as we in the flesh, cannot attain to God. What matters to Lawrence is that his body which is the unifier of everything that he thinks or feels will not capitulate to God; it will assert itself even against God. But he has accepted God; there is conflict. He will not accept an immanent God as, let us say, Wordsworth accepted Him in nature. For that he has substituted what he calls his integrity, but which is really nothing more than the awareness that he, Lawrence, is experiencing these things freshly, distinctly, as far as he can, feeling himself apart from everyone else. God cannot usurp the function of his integrity—and yet he must admit the religious experience. And so he devises an elaborate system to provide for both. He is spiritual (as far as he can be with the dark blood thrown back and forth) only in the short period between sleep and complete self-awareness, in the morning.

"Matthew I am, the man.
And I take the wings of the morning, to Thee, Crucified, Glorified."

But remember, Saviour,
That my heart, which like a lark at heaven's gate singing, hovers
morning-bright to Thee,
Throws still the dark blood back and forth . . . "

But he cannot stay at the spiritual level, the level of abstraction, even though the heart of man "throws still the dark blood back and forth" there.

"I must be put down, Lord, in the afternoon, . . . "

The afternoon is the period of absolute integrity, of absolute self-awareness.

"Into the fathomless, bottomless pit
Where my soul falls in the last throes of bottomless convulsion,
and is fallen
Utterly beyond Thee, Dove of the Spirit;
Beyond everything except itself."[6]

"The night with its call of sex dissipates this integrity:
Sex, which breaks up our integrity, our single inviolability, our deep
silence,
Tearing a cry from us."[7]

There are, then, three levels of existence corresponding to three periods of the day, the spiritual in the morning, the integral or individual in the afternoon, and the communal or sexual at night.[8]

Again, as in the poem, *To Let Go Or Hold On,* Lawrence is thrown back into himself. He and his integrity are incompatible with anything outside himself. His religion is a holy trinity without God. It has no

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[6] *St. Matthew. Collected Poems.* Cape and Smith. 1929.
[7] *Tortoise Shout. Collected Poems,* Vol. 2.
[8] In the *Fantasia* Lawrence identifies the integral with the religious, showing himself how temporary this arrangement was.

finality except in Lawrence. But that finality contradicts the religious experience, just as it contradicted the cosmic experience, just as it necessarily contradicts any experience beyond Lawrence. In fact, he himself tells us as much. He can only communicate absolute spirituality negatively, as the denial of his earthly life of devouring always himself:

"Ha, I was a blaze leaping up!
I was a tiger bursting into sunlight.
I was greedy, I was mad for the unknown.
I, new-risen, resurrected, starved from the tomb,
starved from a life of *devouring always myself*,
now here was I, new-wakened, with my hand stretching out
and touching the unknown, the real unknown, the unknown unknown."[9]
(Italics mine)

But he is still the hungry tiger, the Lawrence Man. His religious experience is only one among many passionate experiences. For him it has no particular integrating force. A religious poem, like a poem about the Oxford accent, no more or less, simply reiterates Lawrence.

Lawrence, the Man, functions for the organized attitude of other poets. An organized attitude for Lawrence would mean sterility. He himself stands for ever fresh, pristine experience. Actually, however, he stands for something more or less than that. He stands for a peculiar, personal way of reacting to the world. Nothing would be easier than to "spot" a Lawrence poem. *Lawrence* is written all over it. This is not merely intended as a metaphor. In fleeing abstraction the poet got deeper and deeper into himself, all the time conceiving himself as the essence of "rainbow-change." But he was not that. None of us is. Only the normal reaction to idiosyncrasy is a rationalization, an orientation with reference to the experiences of others which environment imposes on us. Lawrence sought to evade this by an egocentric orientation, not because he thought himself more important, but because he thought he could become so by digging into himself, so to speak, for unpolluted experience. And so, in the end, he was forced to accept himself with all his limitations, isolated beyond his own necessity, yet not isolated enough to achieve his self-imposed end. His failure was that, recognizing and admitting only himself, he was trying to cope with problems that were essentially social—as every writer, willy-nilly, is. A consistent, permanent attitude towards one's self and towards one's universe is the reality towards which every serious writer moves, which only the great ones attain. It is more hazardous than the phisolopher's reality because it must not only be permanent and congruous, it must be plastic. That is, it must permit of growth and extension; in a word, it must be dynamic. The sterility in a philosopher's attitude is there for others to recognize, but the artist is the first one to recognize it in himself. It was this sterility that Lawrence loathed. But the self-consciousness of his rainbow-new experience indicates that it was not entirely sufficient to him. As Rudolph Kassner has said,[10] the really naked man knows nothing of it, and the man in uniform is not supposed to know it.

[9] *New Heaven and Earth. Collected Poems.*
[10] *Concerning Vanity. The Criterion.* October, 1930.

Now, Lawrence had the opportunity of wearing a uniform (his own metaphysic) without knowing it. Instead he preferred to be naked and to know it. This necessity for knowledge indicates a necessity for a more complex experience than Lawrence was willing to admit to himself. But the necessity nevertheless persisted, so that he could not achieve the conscious-free freshness of experience, and there was no complexity to compensate.

One grants that fresh, untainted experience is the writer's material, that he cannot blindly accept all the dicta which suavely answer his vital questioning. But one does not achieve this self-consciousless experience by going back into a primitive state. Those who had never known any other might be autonomous in such a state, but we are so far removed from that we can only revert to it by a conscious intention to be primitive. We can only completely lose ourselves in problems as far beyond us as the primitives' were beyond them. We cannot paternally indulge a simple state of spontaneous living. Thus Einstein's universe *is* a pristine experience for Einstein, Hardy's for him, Joyce's for him. We cannot decide that we are going to be pristine, and if we are going to be pristine today in any genuine sense, we are going to be pretty complicated. The tom-tom reiteration of the Lawrence Man signifying, "This is so fresh and utterly new," does not take the place of something really new. Newness predicates itself; it has no need to be underlined.

I have not gone into this criticism of Lawrence's point of view to show that it is invalid, but to indicate a source which it would not admit to itself. Lawrence had metaphysical tendencies which were not to be denied simply because he had the poet's enthusiasm for spontaneity. Finally he could not deny them; he could only pervert them into self-reiteration. He immortalized the particular, he immortalized a manner of experiencing; he immortalized a particular manner of expeirencing; finally he immortalized himself—but only to himself. We on the outside are so cut off from him (as we would be from anyone who devoted himself exclusively to himself) that we can only regard him as a strange, talented creature who has nothing to say to us. We can understand his genesis because he started as we all start, with problems common (within limits) to us all, and tools for their solution not unlike our own, in many respects superior. But we cannot understand what he says because he has receded from our world into his own, which he chooses to identify with a primitive, natural one. In this world he beclouded his own problems and with them ours. He avoided abstraction when abstraction was his most crying need. He devoted himself to himself, the symbol of perpetual newness, but that was a life of self-devouring, as he himself confessed. In the *Fantasia,* where the concept of Polarity is developed, he says: Yet we *must* know, if only to learn how not to know. The supreme lesson of human consciousness is to learn how *not to know.* That is, how *not to interfere.*" But he never learned the great reciprocal of that moral, which he has taught us by his example: The supreme lesson of human

unconsciousness is to learn how *not to feel*. *That* is how *not to interfere*. A life of continuous feeling is a life of self-devouring. Something might be said for sensibility (as opposed to feeling) as the source of poetic experience, but that is another problem. It is enough to say that, if we conceive sensibility of mental and emotional derivation, we must admit that Lawrence wrote almost entirely without it.

The end-product of the reaction between Lawrence's metaphysical proclivity and his determination to relentlessly pursue the new and the unformulated, is his concept of polarity. Polarity is the symbol for the autonomous functioning of the human organism. It divides the body into poles, all in pairs, which, if unhindered by the mind, would establish the healthy and fresh reaction of the organism to its environment. Mind is the great polluter of experience. It imposes sterile abstractions on the lower, self-sufficient centers and diseases them. The perfect experience, for example, takes place in the infant where mind is virtually non-functioning and nothing has been spoiled. The solar plexus, located under the navel, is the seat of first self-awareness. But it is an awareness of self as continuous with the infant's universe, chiefly its connection with the mother. The excitation of this pole is immediately equilibrated by its opposite, the lumbar plexus. Here is the seat of first self-awareness of the individual as an entity. The infant straightens his back and screams his self-ness, his insularity. This "perfect" experience would proceed naturally from lower to higher pole if it were uncorrupted by the vitiating force of social institutions epitomized in sterile abstraction.

Here is Lawrence, the alchemist, trying to create the permanent value of an unshifting attitude, by analysis of a perfect manner of experiencing. In his poems and his novels he is seeking that perfect experience, in his essays he analyzes it; but nowhere is there any evidence that he attained it. Rather, the evidence he furnishes would indicate that he was running away from it. His concept of a perfect experience in the infant might very reasonably extend itself to "poles" within the brain. For a motive which I have tried to explain, that was outlawed. The tragic paradox of it all is that, having outlawed the apparent function of the mind, he decides with that mind what is the perfect lower response, decides with the same mind that it is perpetually desirable, and mentally focuses his body on its perpetual attainment. The irony of it, that he should himself have been the victim of his own theory which denied theory.

THE WESTERN DANCE OF DEATH

BY CARL E. GEHRING

LENDING weight to the belief that the civilization of the West is receding, the aspects of musical art point to decline. When Confucius said, "If you would know whether a country is well governed and of good morals, listen to its music," he voiced a truism which applies to all peoples and times. Music is the subtle index of the spiritual condition of its spokesmen; its state of health or infirmity sounds the degree of integrity or decay of a social order that expresses itself in tones. The validity of the Confucian view, moreover, is born out by its application to our music and culture.

While the musical evidences of decline in America center about the jazz-phenomenon, from the broader western standpoint they assume various ramifications. There are the results of materialism and commercialism upon music, which show the art to be adjusting itself to the economic demands and falling standards of an ailing culture. There is the feature of democracy in music, inducing an insidious playing-down to the uncultivated and uncomprehending mass-mind. There is the technique of composition, which has grown to such proportions since the time of Wagner and Brahms as to stifle rather than aid the free flow of musical ideas; what was a means to the end of expression for a Beethoven has become an academic end in itself. Of greater import than the foregoing items, however, is the emphasis that is being given to rhythm, the most elemental and elementary of ingredients of which musical structure is composed.

Music in its primitive forms is essentially rhythmic. What attempts at melody are discernible in aboriginal music are embryonic indicators of what is to follow as peoples develop. Nobler instincts beget melodies of sweep and pretension. A feeling for harmony carries on the sequence of growth.* Further expansion involves contrapuntal harmony, a harmony made more flexible by introducing bits of counter-melody that comment on the main theme. Thus the bridge to counterpoint, wherein melody is pitted against melody, is prepared. Finally, double and compound counterpoint, wherein melodies vie with melodies, offer a study in maturity for the student and musicologist.

Wagner and Brahms, of the once-dominant German school, brought the art of composition to its loftiest peak of development; that is, they were the last of the great German composers who wrote with telling conviction. Although they composed in unrelated fields and were basi-

*No account is taken here of the choral counterpoint which played a part in the development of harmony.

cally unsympathetic, Brahms, the abstract genius, and Wagner, the dramatic artist, not only uttered the last words in their respective spheres, but summed up the message of German music and, for that matter, the music of the West; with their passing, the musical sceptre which had been Germany's passed from Occidental to Slavic and Tartar peoples. More recent Teutons such as Reger, Mahler, Strauss and Schoenberg may have evolved scores which are more technically intricate than Wagner's and Brahms', but they lack the essential substance which distinguished the works of the latter men and scaled European music up to Parnassian heights.

Thus, while Wagner and Brahms were past-masters of composition, since their deaths in 1883 and 1897, respectively, the writing of western music has witnessed such a carrying forward of what were their technical propensities, minus their powers of conviction, that a comparatively soulless "music for musicians only" has been wrought. The post-Brahmsian-Wagnerian music of the West has become inarticulate, and it is bereft of soul by reason of its artificial creation and derivation from formulas, molds and rules of composition. It is as impersonal as fashioning a piece of wood-design on a lathe, as devoid of temperament as a turtle-dove, and wanting in emotional appeal.

About the time that Occidental music was growing artificial and less profound, a new and striking music, powerful in its expression of unbridled instincts and passions, was making itself heard. This was the music of Russia, which appeared about 1850 and began exerting its influence some decades later.

That worth-while music can be written, without too seriously applying the cumbersome technique of the scholars of an over-ripe culture, was proved by the pregnant and sustaining quality of the Russian contribution. The too obvious asset of having so vast a musical grammar at the disposal of those with only a flair for writing is a dubious quantity; witness the western scene, with a musical literature that is cluttered with works of pedantic character. That native talent, moreover, creatively outstrips intelligence, however brilliant and technically equipped, however fired by whisky, cigarets and women, was shown by the extraordinary growth from the soil of Slavic music. Russian composers, for example, relatively untutored and writing for sheer self-expression, naively began at the beginning in their crude attempts to compose, and did this, as the Negroes were to do later in the United States and as musical primitives will, by emphasizing the importance of rhythm.

Once the Russians had struck their gait and gained foreign recognition, the puissant rhythms, so marked in their new and vital scores, began to permeate the minds and appear in the music of Occidental composers. From the academic or western standpoint, this seemed like retrogression; from the primitive or Slavic, it was but natural. While the getting back to fundamentals of a supremely cultivated musical art implied pernicious forces at work in a sophisticated culture, the stark and rugged quality of a new Russian music betokened the fresh vitality and vigor of a coming people.

It is well, at this juncture, to recall that the art of intrinsic value is the art which reflects the age that produced it. Confucius had something of the kind in mind when he made his remark about the revealing character of music. Indeed, art often has shown itself to be prophetic by its reactions to the subtler trends of the times; creators, as a class, feminine in their intuition, respond to the delicate and sensitive stimuli that are lost upon grosser consciousnesses. It is obvious that the modern woman was forecast in Ibsen's plays, that the dramas of Wedekind bespoke a new era in sexual relationships, that the Soviet order was presaged in the works of last-century Russian authors. It also seems evident, after reflecting upon modern music in the light of western civilization, that, while the Caucasians appear to be running in circles in the name of progress, their music already has indicated what is to transpire.

The fact that Occidental music from about 1900 on was adopting the more virile style of composition, after its inception by the Russians, has more than artistic implications. These may escape the casual observer, not given to penetrating thought on aesthetic questions, but they are of paramount importance. Must the foci of civilization, then, shift to other than western centers, to those peoples best fitted for the task of rejuvenation? In reply, the aspects of music not only indicate an affirmative answer, but suggest that the change is and has for some time been in process of realization, as first hand scrutiny of the situations in Russia and the United States will disclose.

These two countries loom as the leaders of the future. From the American standpoint, this appears to be contingent upon the ability of a combined Caucasian and Negro population to carry on. Socially, an America which has absorbed the Negro race is forecast. But the case of Russia merits prior consideration, by reason of its seniority.

II.

Politically, the Slavs assumed a new position of world-importance with the signing of the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk on March 3, 1918. Artistically, they were becoming a world-force during the nineteenth century; indeed, their doing so foreshadowed social and political advancement. The fact that these people were acquiring an aptitude for the arts implied intellectual growth. Naively effecting in music what Tolstoy was urging in the way of social reform, a repudiation of European traditions and a growth anew from the soil, Russian composers wrote in an original and exotic vein, completely denying the "musical mathematics" of the then-supreme German school.

No more intensely national scores than those of *The Five*, Balakirev, Borodin, Cui, Moussorgsky and Rimsky-Korsakov, powerful coterie of last-century Slavic music, ever were written. Under the influence of Glinka, the so-called father of the Russian school, this group went to their people for material. As W. J. Henderson has stated in an essay on Tchaikovsky, there are folk songs appropriate for every phase of Russian life: "Curious and unrestrained rhythms, uncommon cadences,

closing on the supertonic sometimes, free and pliable metres, and dark harmonies are the salient characteristics of these Russian melodies." Being of the soil, these songs are the pure expression of human souls.

Thus the innermost soul of Russia, brought forward by Slavic composers through their use of folk material, was made to chant in concert-halls; so the weird and threatening dances of a moujik long thwarted, once heard abroad, loosed a revolutionary flood in the stream of music, momentous and prophetic of the bolshevist challenge which was to take tangible form decades later at Brest-Litovsk.

Occidental culture conceded the point in another way: in the attitude toward Moussorgsky. Whereas Glinka, Dargomizhky, Tchaikovsky, Rubinstein and, in varying degree, four of the coterie enjoyed comparative recognition during their lives, Moussorgsky had been dead forty years before his works obtained any vogue. Then French recognition brought this about, the Latin mind, in the throes of twentieth-century ennui and ripe for resuscitation, turning of necessity to the creations of this "Dostoevsky of music."

The unconventional temper and barbaric conception of Moussorgsky's scores had precluded their immediate acceptance. Their music is replete with crude humor, grotesque expression and scathing satire; unalloyed beauty is seldom present; here sounds the rough eloquence of another order, forged in the inferno of human woe. One of Moussorgsky's characteristic songs, *Fair Savishna,* represents a half-witted peasant boy pleading his hopeless love for a village belle. The close of the Revolutionary Scene from *Boris Godounov* finds an idiot, alone in the snow, bemoaning in tenebrous accents the fate of Russia. The composer's reactionary bent is emphasized by the fact that *Boris* was the first opus of an operatic trilogy into which he had planned to incorporate the three major Russian revolutions which preceded the bolshevist overturn of 1917-1918. The uprisings of the supposed Dmitri against Czar Boris (*Boris Godounov*), of the Khovanskies in the time of Peter the Great (*Khovantschina*), and of Pougatschev in the reign of Catherine the Great (only sketches for this work remain) were to have comprised this epic of revolt. In his desire to get away from European hegemony, moreover, Moussorgsky made a fetish of flouting traditions. As a result, he was misunderstood. Ibsen's declaration, "I hold that that man is in the right who is most closely in league with the future," took time in finding verification here.

While broader recognition followed the French lead, certain pedagogues, sheltered by university cloisters from too sharp awareness of the growing pains of another order, still seek to discredit the unschooled Moussorgsky who never mastered the A-B-C's of his stock in trade and backed blocks of harmony together like so many freight cars. It is only fair to add that some of this music would have been relegated to museums but for the editing it was accorded by Rimsky-Korsakov and others, yet the onset of interest in Moussorgsky has come about as naturally as social orders succeed one another. Times have caught up with the futurist. He whom the late James Gibbons Huneker termed "a musical primitive" now is of the hour.

Tchaikovsky, on the other hand, once heralded as the foremost of Russian composers, has but fairly stood the test of time. Born of Russian father and French mother and coming under the sway of Mozart and Liszt so as to alter his national earmarks, he became more cosmopolite than exponent of Russian music. For this he was at odds with *The Five*, yet it is his eclecticism which engages our attention. Reflecting the doubts and self-questioning which were beginning to trouble European minds, Tchaikovsky, better than anyone else, set to music the hysteria and inner troublous life of a psychopathic individual. His perennial melancholy was not the dark Russian despair so ably sounded by Moussorgsky, but the self-pity of a more shallow person. Comparing Tchaikovsky's moments of serenity with those of the earlier Beethoven, moreover, reveals how seductive and less exalted the graces were become as western decadence approached.

A pregnant analogy is offered by turning briefly to the civilization of the ancient Greeks and considering two famous examples of sculpture. The Venus of Milo, carved in a period when Greek culture was in the making, compares favorably, from the æsthetic standpoint, with any representative composition of Beethoven; the Venus of Medici, by Lysippus, on the other hand, from the post-Peloponnesian-War era of Greek history, has less desirable points in common with Tchaikovsky's scores. Dissipated, in the latter works, are the high aspiration and contained serenity of the Venus of Milo and Beethoven; in their stead are the impassioned, somnolent and elegant features which identify the art of less sturdy and luxury-loving epochs. It is a commentary on the innate sensitivity and sincerity of the wine-imbibing Tchaikovsky that he noted the subtle sociological trends of his day with such fidelity. As his music recorded the early signs of western decadence, so the rise and fall of Greece may be traced by studying Grecian art.

Thus, Tchaikovsky, while not so musically significant as Moussorgsky, was representative and timely. His advent foreshadowed the contemporary horde of morbid, sad young men who abound in times of moral and spiritual sag. A kind of musical ambassador of "European" Europe in Russia, Tchaikovsky, in negative and subjective manner, caught at and bespoke the less stable currents abroad, just as Moussorgsky and his neo-Russian colleagues gave musical speech to the rousing and contagious vitality of their revolutionary compatriots. Coming and going, Russia reflected and reacted upon a self-doubting European intellectualism, loosing its own vigor on an over-ripe and non-resisting foreign musical art. So the pagan and barbaric rhythms of grim, northern folk dances went hurtling all-conquering through the Occidental musical realm, leaving a state of chaos and rampant rhythm in the ascendancy.

III

It seems a far jump from last-century Russia to present-day America, but it is not unseemly when one considers our approach. Although the composers of western music were not slow in sensing the gaunt strength of the new Russian contribution, and although they soon began incul-

cating the rhythmic tendencies which made the Slavic idiom so virile into their comparatively enfeebled music, the show of strength that their action set up was at best a pose, a borrowed and second-hand entity, and as much a shadow of the real thing as is anti-climax in the wake of climax. Since we are more immediately concerned with rhythm in its primitive forms, consideration of the American-Negro contribution must come first, however chronologically out of order it is.

In America, offshoot of European culture, the evidences of a Russian-impelled rhythmic rebirth in western music were but faintly registered. In the first place, there was no definite school of composers here to absorb new practices; the manner in which isolated figures such as MacDowell and Griffes reacted would not have been significant had their attitudes been uniform because there were not enough of them to constitute a movement. In the second place, Americans, wholly absorbed in conquering a continent, had little time and energy for cultural appreciation. Hence our music, meaningless and a second-rate echo of what was going on in Europe, Russia included, did not merit serious consideration. If such is not the case today, it is not so much due to outside influences as it is to Negro stimuli; and because the latter are of a more primitive order than the Slavic, the theory of western decline applies with multiple force to the United States and suggests that this country, as it now is racially composed, will cease to be.

Approach to the question of an altered America can be negotiated through the medium of jazz. While the importance of this music does not lie so much in what it now is as it does in its possibilities for growth, jazz lends itself well to an age in which the precious is outmoded and a rugged and concise quality best expresses the times. Although jazz is younger than and not intimately related to modern Occidental music, its appearance on the musical horizon is of towering significance. For jazz, being essentially rhythmic, has in certain respects duplicated recent musical tendencies, incidentally supporting the view of a white race in the doldrums and implying, as the Russian phenomenon implies Russian dominance of Eurasia at least, that the vitality and status of future America depend greatly on what the blacks can offer.

Jazz is this country's individual contribution to musical composition. The bulk of the American population responds to it as the Latins take to their native opera, the Teutons to their sonatas and symphonies, and the Slavs to their folk songs. The appeal of jazz, moreover, is universal. This was verified by the unhesitating manner with which our cosmopolitan society took it up, and it is being confirmed by its growing vogue abroad. To say that jazz orchestras score unmitigated triumphs with their hearers is not enough; the bare assertion lacks descriptive punch. In order to comprehend the degree with which this musical departure has people by the ears, one has to attend a jazz concert and witness the extravagant and raucous enthusiasm of the audience for the terrific verve, dash, go, rattle, reckless syncopation and pep that is jazz.

George Bernard Shaw, when asked if England were better off in consequence of the World War, replied:

> "No; what has happened to England is just what has happened to the other belligerents—they have found out what savages they are under all

> their pretenses of civilization. It has taken a little of the moral conceit out of us; that is all."

Jazz has been similarly revealing. This upstart has invaded all of the western countries and transformed their dancing halls and ball rooms into clinics where vicarious sexual enjoyment is practiced openly and defiantly by those whose sphinx-like absorption in lascivious rhythm and interlocking thighs attests their oneness of mind. It is the universal savage of all peoples that jazz addresses with such depraving results.

Fritz Kreisler hit the nail on the head when he defined jazz as the revenge of the jungle on civilization. In the final act of Ernest Krenek's opera *Jonny Spielt Auf* (*Johnny Strikes Up*), the spirit of Kreisler's idea goes to logical conclusion when Jonny, a Negro, bestrides the clock in the railroad station and strikes up on the violin. Soon the entire company is dancing to the strains "that have come from the New World and laid their conquering hold on the Old." It is of slight moment that America, where democracy has been on the rampage to the extent of discrediting what is best and placing a premium on mediocrity, showed preference for a vulgar idiom. But the fact that Paris, pivot of western culture and contemporary world-thought, in her acceptance of jazz has again conceded the point to the primitive, offers scant hope to those who believe that the decline of the West may be stayed. Krenek, a relatively obscure figure up to the writing of *Jonny Spielt Auf*, won notice with the opera, not because of the value of the score but due to the timeliness and essential truth of the play he set to music.

The significance of jazz is further reaching. Jazz is hybrid, the mulatto of musical composition, offspring of the union of aboriginal rhythms with the Caucasian scheme of music. With the subtle saying of Confucius and the prophetic side of art in mind, it is evident that the social future of the United States is definitely presaged. The assumption is borne out by what sociologists declare to be the ultimate working out of the race problem in America: amalgamation of the Caucasian and Negro peoples. Not only is it apparent that this fusion of racial stocks is going on, but anthropologists have the statistics which prove it. Thus musical art, through the medium of jazz, has stolen a march in showing how the black race is getting back at the white for the latter's exploitation of the former. In jazz there already is the musical union of the two peoples.

One may attach as much factual as fanciful importance to the statement that the United States may yet be the black sheep among the nations of white civilization. Our concentration of wealth has brought us, whether justly or unjustly, the label of "Shylock"; our slavish dependence on material things has not caused worthy minds to ponder without reason the prospect of super-industrialism's becoming the Frankenstein monster of the West. There is the failure of democracy, an ideal unattained largely because gold can no more be wrought from the base metals in human terms than it can in chemical, efforts of mass-education to the contrary notwithstanding. There is the inference of jazz, lending weight to the opinion that the primitive has the sophisticate on the jump.

To sum up the American situation, musicologists of perspective are honest enough to grant that the Negro race has given this country its

only pure folk music. In this material is good material for a national music, but not for the Caucasian race to exploit as white men's music. This also is of black and tan concern. Conditions being as they are, such figures as Whiteman, Waring, young Kahn and Lewis bid fair to become historic in musical annals for their association with the American idiom in embryo. Man for man, they fail to hold their own with musicologists and the êlite of the art. This was apparent in the inadequate and ambiguous retorts made by Whiteman in his encounter with Ernest Newman, London music critic, at the time that Whiteman's orchestra played in England. It is doubtful if the significance of his position ever occurred to Whiteman. Yet the jazz director and others of his genre loom as more momentous figures than do the most pellucid of warbling sopranos, the tenderest of soulful violinists, and the most effete of orchestral conductors. The latter represent what may be a dying cause. Whiteman's lot, with everything to gain and nothing to lose, is with the new in music, just as the white man's lot, with everything to lose and nothing to gain, is with the black in the inevitable new New World of the Mulatto.

IV

To sum up jazz more conclusively in terms of western music and its relation to the future of Occidental civilization, as against American music and its bearing on a mulatto United States to come, it has made little impression on the music of the West. This is probably due to the fact that jazz was resolved into tangible form only as recently as the World-War era. At home, it is more immediately momentous in being the united musical expression of two races, living side by side and ultimately commingling; away, its significance assumes broader import in that jazz's rhythmic propensities have duplicated Russian musical tendencies. While late composers such as Henry Gilbert, American, and Antonin Dvorak, Bohemian, appreciated the value of Negro material to the extent of incorporating it into some of their works, jazz as jazz has made its entry into the music of but isolated figures. In this country, they comprise men such as Gershwin, Harling, Carpenter and Bloch. Thus, all philosophical considerations aside, only in such slight degree has the jazz-idiom physically influenced western music that the latter has derived but little in the way of rhythmic absorption from the blacks.

As suggested before, the rhythmic feature of last-century Russian music was of a contagious quality which communicated its explosive energy to the less moving Occidental music. This return of a primitive manifestation in western music has given it a second-hand attribute of fibre, a sophisticated-primitive as against a primitive-primitive identity, which amounts to the graceful form and vitality of a tennis player as contrasted with the coarse vigor and brutish force of a Cossack. That the rhythms of western music, written roughly after 1900, have not been conceived and felt by their creators in the way that Russian composers felt and expressed Slavic folk dances was evidenced by the use that Occidental composers made of rhythm. Soon the round of technique was having its inning with rhythm, the latter being used as an end rather than a means

to the end of expression. Soon rhythms were being employed and deployed in the way that melodies had been, in a mathematical and competitive game of position and juxtaposition. Contrapuntal rhythm has resulted, and with it has come the exploitation of the last ingredient of musical structure that there remained to exploit. It marks the end.

This is its own answer to those who believe that in the rhythmic rebirth of western music there is the dawn of a new musical era. Rhythms heretofore have connoted starting-points: in the rhythms of the aborigines there is music in its infancy; the scores of the earlier composers of western music, such as Scarlatti, Couperin, Rameau, Bach, Haydn, Mozart and Dittersdorf, are replete with strongly marked but simple rhythms; the rhythmic feature of Slavic music forecast Russia's musical dominance. Why not another point of departure today, in terms of the industrial epoch? Why not a comeback like the one made by Geraldine Farrar? Shorn of operatic flim-flam, she now sings more artistically in recital than she sang while making good theater at the Metropolitan Opera. These questions, however, are answered in the negative when music is considered in its several phases.

Whereas, Farrar still had natural resources to sustain her, the art of spinning themes has been worn threadbare. Composers fairly have stood on their heads in trying to say something new since Wagner and Brahms said the last words with such conviction. In the quest for originality, foreign elements have been adopted. The influence of the Orient, for example, is manifest, not only in Russian music where one expects the Asiatic to be apparent, but with such a distant figure as the English Gustav Holst, whose *Beni Mora* Suite embodies Eastern material. The late Claude Debussy occupies a niche by himself for his individual use of the whole-tone scale. Certain other composers have even gone back to classicism, in obvious effort to make a fresh start. Now that rhythm is exploited, the art of composition, with basic resources exhausted, may be silenced.

Another viewpoint suggests that if the music of our, the youngest, civilization is to continue progressing, it must inevitably develop to the stage of quarter tones, long since used by certain older Oriental cultures. If this is so, then the instrumental side of western music must be correspondingly oriented. It amounts to revolution, of course; revolution in the physical sense, evolution in the intellectual, and the one to consider since the West is taking such stock of itself. Possibly here is a reason for the modernist revival of interest in classical music: an unconscious feeling on the part of Occidental thinkers that our culture is getting on, with a subsequent subtle affirmation on their part of a desire to retain the youth that is symbolized by the older music.

V

In the meantime, the number and kind of ballets that come from men such as Ravel in France, and Stravinsky and Prokofieff, Russian expatriates, attest the epidemic of dance and rhythmic debauch in western music. Probably the zenith of sophistication in music is embodied in *Le Sacre du*

Printemps, by Stravinsky, who has resided in France since his youth and become a leading spokesman of Occidental rather than Russian music. Rhythm for itself alone has found more abstract expression in the scores of such diverse figures as Holst, Holbrooke, Sibelius, Bartok, Dohnanyi, Strauss, Hindemith, Schoenberg, Casella, Pizzetti, Malipiero, de Falla, Albeniz, Dukas, Poulenc, Milhaud, Bloch, Ornstein and Antheil. In the compound rhythms of these representative men, one encounters rhythms which contain little or no vestige of the folk dance; rather are they "manufactured" rhythms, the scientifically conceived contributions of musical art to the industrial era.

It is sometimes assumed that the rhythmic feature of modern music has been solely impelled by the compelling drive and beat of the machine-age. While there is ground for this view, it overlooks the fact that the rhythmic phenomenon appeared after the coming of Glinka signified the birth of a Russian musical consciousness. Industrialism, although it expanded apace with music's rhythmic development in the last century, was not yet brought to the nerve-shattering and soul-disintegrating magnitude which induces such sardonic and warning commentaries from composers of the left wing of contemporary music.

It has been inevitable that the machine-age add its madding impetus to the primitive urge. The throb of city-life, the whir of dynamos and motors, and the hammer of riveting machines displace the staid and long-winded in musical expression as surely as the precious and studied scores of the "mighty dead," as an authority refers to dead composers, have slight appeal for most people of this direct, plain-spoken and matter-of-fact era. Honegger's characterization of a railroad locomotive in his orchestral tone-poem *Pacific 231* is a transposition of a phase of modern life into music. *Rugby* is a musical delineation by the same composer of a football game. Converse, in another clever orchestral work, has depicted a Ford automobile. In Carpenter's *Skyscrapers Ballet,* modernism in various aspects is projected. Bloch, in his epic-rhapsody *America,* presents a horrific portrayal of the present-day United States in which all manner of rhythms and ugliness are given unrestrained utterance.

The composers of works such as these are denounced as charlatans by the afore-mentioned commentator, who ignores them and champions the scores of the "mighty dead." Charlatans they may be, but they cannot be dismissed with such a gesture; they are too representative, and their charlatanism is too grounded in the charlatanism of the age of which they write. It is through no fault of theirs that they are born of a people who suffer from nerve-strain, neuroses and psychoses, the beginnings of which Tchaikovsky sensed; nor is it their fault that they have a top-heavy technique of composition to master, which is to musical ideas what organized religion is to the ideas of men like Christ, Mohammed and Confucius. In portraying a charlatan age just as it strikes them, Stravinsky, Hindemith, Schreker, Witkowski, Gruenberg, Bax and others are being sincere charlatans, as it were. From the standpoint of the musicians, the trouble is with the times; from the perspective of infinity, the trouble is no trouble at all, but simply the manifestation of the end of another race-cycle.

Hope for the future of the West is bleak enough, when considered from

the two lines of argument here outlined: musical and sociological. As one might gather they would do, in the light of the Confucian saying, music and sociology complement and supplement one another, and both support the belief that Occidental culture is on the wane. On the sociological side, there is the theory of Oswald Spengler, as presented in his *Decline of the West,* that with the arrival of the city-phase in the life of a civilization, the decline of that culture is at hand. That the status of our citified order is in agreement with this is shown by such a spiritually-revealing or key-art as is music. Whereas the puissant dance rhythms of peoples who are still in the agricultural stage, such as the last-century Russians were and as our plantation-Negroes are, may be representative of peoples with the makings of civilizations before them, the mechanical and contrapuntal rhythms of modern western music are the impersonal rhythms of a bored and played-out people who are reverting to type.

Thus we find that in music's echo of the clashing rhythms of factories and urban life there is struck the false and synthetic note of robots and a metropolitan order of life which can scarcely endure: an order of such unsound premises as to make the means of life, acquiring money, the end of life itself; as to have the purpose of our courts subordinated to duels of legal wits, with victory and not the administration of justice the ultimate end. Consistent with this confusion of values, certain mincing pedants place the technique of producing art above art itself. Witness Moussorgsky's foes; witness the theorist who told George Gershwin that he should begin at the beginning to learn to compose because he could not combine the common chords.

Yet, when one recalls that such seers as Ibsen and Wedekind also fell heir to ridicule, it seems unnecessary to suggest that it is what Moussorgsky and Gershwin have said, not how they have said it, that is important. Their scholarly critics, more concerned with what has happened than with current trends and tendencies, may be excused on academic grounds if their appraisals of modern music have the weight of a shadow. Naturally such intellectual ostriches lack the perspective to recognize the terrible import and bristling challenge of music's primitives, and the foreboding concession of its "charlatans"; perhaps they may be remembered, not for individual achievement, but for having brought such spokesmen of the times as Moussorgsky and Gershwin into sharper relief. Definitely representing the primitive, Moussorgsky and the exponent of jazz, however far they may be removed from the standpoints of geography, race, time and artistic ideals, are brothers-in-cause in that as Moussorgsky once spoke in Russia, Gershwin speaks in this country for a new civilization and social order to come.

VI.

The over-powering sense of fatigue and futility that staggers those who ponder the burden of western civilization is aptly epitomized in an article by Paul Rosenfeld, in his *Musical Chronicle* (1917-1923), of a concertino by Stravinsky. About the music, which was played by the Flonzaley String Quartet in New York City some years ago to the tart disap-

proval of the audience, Mr. Rosenfeld reported in part:

> "Something had been sharply, savagely relieved in the concertino. The fiddles had spoken bitterly: futility. They had spoken angrily: boredom; spoken: the joke of it all. The Stravinsky music is a drab, rasping, tired shuffle and breakdown. It is like a locomotive which has fallen off the track, leaving its wheels to revolve in air. Rhythms prolong themselves out of sheer inertia; pound on, wearily. A lyric coda of a few measures, a sort of momentary illumination of a darkened landscape, breaks off into silence just as it begins to establish itself . . . The machine continues of its proper momentum long after the meaning of its activity has been lost. At the end, Petrushka summons himself to speak. He wants to say something conclusive about life, to seize the spark of emotion which suddenly glints in him. He commences 'Oh, Life!——' then stops short. There is so much to be said that it serves no end to speak. There is nothing to be said at all. Finis—the world for him. Finis—perhaps for all men. Finis—of a certainty, a civilization."

Naturally its hearers did not like the concertino. Those who grasped it hardly could be expected to fancy the inference, that the hideous music was an artistic transposition of their hectic lives and outworn culture. So they protested it by hissing; yet they did nothing tangible about it in their refusal to recognize, let alone concede, Stravinsky's abstruse contentions as voiced in his concertino. Therein lies the hopelessness of this civilization-become-unwieldy: the indifference and obliviousness of those individuals, whom one might expect to be most concerned in the forces of change, to fundamental issues which challenge the West.

Posterity may be informed that remedies such as white solidarity, to maintain the Occidental margin of power; eugenics, to invigorate the racial fibre, and birth control, to arrest "aimless over-population," as Theodore Dreiser has put it, were advocated in vain by the intelligent minority of our day. On the other hand, such a futurist as Spengler had conceived his *Decline of the West* before the World War, before sufficient perspective was possible to identify that holocaust as the Peloponnesian War of modern times. Similarly, the appearance of barbaric rhythms in music was a subtle and prophetic indicator of the less idealistic, less spiritual, less reposeful age to follow which is ours.

It is in the nature of things that civilizations, like men, must die, and modern western men, although shrewd enough to have made sex safe for love, although clever enough to have learned to fly, have flown too high in parrying and thwarting natural law. There is comfort in the fact that the foci of civilization may veer to so nearly related a people as those who call Moscow mother. There is solace and superficial cheer in the fact that the majority of our population find little fillips of joy and gaiety in athletics and the dance, connote what dance-music may in the way of racial merging. In these elements there is sublime and needed forgetfulness of the inevitable doom that must still *The Dance of Life,* as Havelock Ellis has it, and blot out to oblivion the West.

THE NON-SENSE OF *THE* WHOLE

BY SIDNEY HOOK

AMONG philosophers, Mr. Waldo Frank has hitherto passed for an interesting critic of life and letters; among literary critics, he has passed for a profound philosopher. Out of gratitude for some striking insights into the character of American life, the first group has refused to judge him by his philosophy; awed by the tone and trappings of philosophic discourse, the second group has refused to judge him by his criticism. *The Re-Discovery of America* shows that neither group has done Waldo Frank a service. For, emboldened by the absence of serious opposition, he has now gone on to present a questionable sociological analysis of American life together with a program and method of reform, as an apparent deduction from an even more questionable metaphysics. Without knowing it, he has written a book in the typical early 19th century German manner. Strange, indeed, that from a man nurtured in the American tradition of hard-headedness and so sensitive to Gallic grace and clarity should come this amorphous spiritualistic sociology in which some very penetrating observations on American life are lost in a mystic rant in excited italics about *the* Whole. Despite, or rather because of, this mystical metaphysics of *the* Whole, Mr. Frank has failed to write a whole book.

Frank's empirical thesis can be simply stated. Out of the disintegration of the medieval synthesis was born the dissident principles of anarchic subjectivism, romanticism and commercialism. In trying to usurp the functions of an integrally organized society, these principles, reflecting as they do only particular aspects of human activity, have made contemporary social life chaotic. Loyalty to an harmonious and richly varied culture has been splintered into a thousand intense loyalties to science, industry, recreation, political party, or what not. These pursue no unified or consistent end, but impelled by their own centrifugal momentum have burst the wheel of the social whole and scattered human energies in all directions beyond the possibility of central control. In the absence of strong cultural traditions in America, particularistic attitudes and mechanical standardization, derived respectively from the backwash of Mediterranean culture and the modern cult of the machine, have made a "jungle" of American life. The immanent dialectic of the development of a part which mistakes itself for the whole results in the frustration of the very purposes which that part set out to attain. For example, if we organize our society to secure physical comfort without reflecting upon the limits and uses of comfort in a good life, its place and context in some plan of social life, we shall produce a civilization which becomes

increasingly uncomfortable with every addition to our store of "conveniences." And so it is with our politics, art and religion. How are we to be led out of this wilderness? First, by driving out the chaos from our own souls; then by a sensitive discipline developing our sense of the Whole until its image becomes focal, and breathing that wholeness into all our social activities. (p. 279 ff.)

The whole is one of the central concepts of traditional metaphysics; and emphasis on the primary "transfiguration" of the individual rather than on social reform or revolution is the essence of Utopianism. Mr. Frank's metaphysics and social Utopianism, therefore, are not new. But that is not my objection to them. What I object to is the fundamental ambiguity in the concept of *the* Whole, the resultant confusion of categories, the shoddy thinking concealed in tortured rhetoric, and the utter inadequacy of Frank's mystic method and formulæ to clear a trail in the jungle of American life. What I welcome is the insight into certain aspects of the American scene and the acute psychological analysis—alas! all too brief—of certain modes of American mentality. Had Frank developed these themes instead of composing a potpourri of metaphysical airs, he would have done more than produce a spottedly brilliant tract for the times.

I

America was born of a dying Europe. And it is in a fair way of dying itself. "Death" is a metaphor for the dissolution of an organic culture, a civilization integrated into a Whole. Strictly speaking, then, America is not dying, for it was never alive as a Whole. But it may develop into one. That is what Frank means by its re-discovery, or better, its *real* discovery. His book then has a purpose—moral or social. It is to assist in bringing the new America into birth. Now there are a great many critical spirits who have been nursing their own visions of what the new America might be. They turn to Frank and sincerely ask, "What *kind* of America? What *specific values* are to be realized? What *specific* form of social organization will best achieve them and how? What's to be done *concretely* now?" In prophetic tones they are answered, "A *Whole* America, a *symphonic* America, a *creative* America." "But," comes the persistent response, "there are many wholes, and many different symphonies may be created from the same tonal scale. Tell us something *specific* about this Whole of yours. What is *the* Whole? In what way is it more relevant to reform than to reaction? Granted that a group is pervaded by a sense of *the* Whole, what specifiable, unique difference will it make in their behavior?" Among the most intelligible of the passages in which Frank tries to tell what his group will do is the following:

> "America to this group will be the imagined Whole—the image of a creative nation which it can work out (and work upon) in its own group life. There will be no time in consequence to clamour for 'rights,' no breath to bewail 'injustice.' Only eyes turned outward see life in these false terms; there are no rights and there is no injustice. Our group from its definitions will know the egoistic falsehood which makes a man claim

> happiness for himself *from* a world where pain and disability are universal; its members will accept their limitations whatever they are, knowing that the particular conditions of their life make it one with all lives which also have their particular conditions; and that these limitations are the condition for work, the stuff for creating. They will know that life's oppressions are due to the oppression of a 'self' clamouring to be absolute and eternal; that the way to be free is not to envy their brother who has the identical problem—whatever his place in the sun. Itself a microcosm of the Whole, the group will accept its chaos to transfigure it. It will look to itself, nurture itself, find both its rights and its injustice in itself. And being truly of the Whole, its work will be a universal action." (p. 257.)

We have asked for bread and have received—a metaphysical gold brick. In trying to catch the spirit of an America in birth, Frank is using one of the most outworn of dying Europe's ideas. His metaphysical whole is a degenerate mystical copy of the absolute of philosophic idealism. It is the night in which all cows are black. I point this out only to show that Frank's logic is not as organic as according to his own theory it should be. The new America must evolve its own leading ideas. At any rate, no matter what his social doctrines are—and aside from a vague socialism, the cultural and political recognition of Latin America, Europe and Russia (p. 262 ff), I find no others—they do not in the least follow *logically* from his metaphysical Whole. The proof is that the exact contradictories of these doctrines are perfectly compatible with the same concept of *the* Whole. *The* Whole is a neutral term as far as *specific* social consequences are concerned. As Frank uses it, it is a category of mystical religion and when introduced into a natural context can only serve for purposes of mystification.

Recent logical analysis has shown that one cannot speak intelligibly of *the* Whole when by that is meant the totality of all possible being, or the class of all possible classes. Nowhere does Frank make it clear whether this is the meaning *the* Whole has for him. He uses the term wherever he refers to some kind of totality, implying that there must be a definite nuclear constant of meaning which remains fixed irrespective of context. What this constant of meaning is, he does not state. He overlooks the obvious fact that there are various *types* of wholes each possessing specific logical structure. A sand-heap is a whole, so is a cannon ball, a machine, an organism, a person, a community, a culture, a corporation, an act. Wholes exist and wholes may be created. The most general sense in which the word "whole" may be used makes it synonymous with order. But who has the hardihood to attempt to deduce from the abstract idea of order specific social doctrines?

But perhaps since Frank is speaking of culture he means by *the* Whole the kind of whole exemplified by the culture of Athens, or medieval Europe. What is such a culture? It is a civilization in which human attitudes and activities display a consistent and integrated rationale, a pattern of living which suppresses no important impulse, in which the major experiences of the individual are significantly linked up with a communal tradition, in which social institutions themselves become the disciplining mechanisms of personal creation. Its type of unity is more than mechanical and less than organic. It very definitely implies a *norma-*

tive system of preferences and rejections which at most are *conditioned* by a socio-physical background but never completely *determined* by them. Consequently, there is a two-fold reference to ethical *purposes* whenever we say we want an organic culture, viz., the desire for a culture so organized as opposed to one that is not organic, and the desire for a particular kind of organic culture as opposed to other organic cultures (slave or feudal). Does Frank merely mean an organic culture when he speaks of *the* Whole? "*Wholeness,*" he writes,

> "*is no mere desired goal; it is the origin and end of all our creative being . . . Wholeness must be both personal and social in order to be either. Individual man cannot achieve his health unless he live, consciously, within a Whole that holds all life.*" (p. 19.)

This is not the limited Wholeness of an organic culture. Substitute "order," or "continuity" in the quoted passage and the meaning does not change. *The* Whole, for Frank, cannot be created or selected; it is a whole which is assumed before we begin to create. Our desires do not determine it; it informs our desires. The common-sense attitude says that we make wholes by breaking *other* wholes. The whole we make, within the limits of the material, is determined by our purpose; the whole we break is some antecedent structure which may express an earlier embodied purpose or the order of the natural raw material we expect to use in our construction. When I build a house I am making a whole by destroying other wholes. These wholes are quite distinct and although one might claim that they are both parts of a greater whole (say, some spatio-temporal process), *the logic of this last whole is not of the same order as the wholes I have additively combined.* By merely naming things I can put them in a whole of discourse, but this whole of discourse is differently organized from the wholes discoursed about. The mystic conception of *the* Whole whose parts consist of other wholes changes its *connotation* with every increase in denotative extent. It is not a principle of organization but of addition. A cell is a whole, an individual made up of cells is a whole, a family made up of individuals is a whole, a community made up of families is a whole, a nation made up of communities is a whole, etc. But the meaning of *whole* has shifted here with every clause. To speak of *the* Whole which includes and expresses itself in all things and then to refer to its specific expression in turn as *the* Whole is meaningless. "The Whole," Frank writes, "acting in a certain way will be church, in a certain way will be state. *The Whole* acting in a certain way will be you and I, and this intrinsic harmony of our acts relating us to the Whole, will join us into a group" (p. 253). What is *the* Whole, here, which acts? On the analogy of the organism it is conceived as the Whole of life. What is "the Whole of life"? Why not say God, Cosmic Consciousness, the Inflnite or anything else that has as little to do with the reform of the American jungle as the action of the stars (which by being known are also brought into the wholeness of man, p. 253) has to do with the American Constitution?

> "Schon gut! Nur muss man sich nicht allzu ängstlich quälen;
> Denn eben wo Begriffe fehlen,
> Da stellt ein Wort zur rechten Zeit sich ein."

To discover *the* Whole, one must have a sense of the whole. "At its simplest, the sense of the whole is the sense of self" (p. 23). It is called a mystic sense, a sixth sense, universal and ineffable. It is a whole-creating sense. "All cultural behavior is but a series of responses to it"—religion, science, art and ethics. In the sense of the whole, Frank has rediscovered Kant's "transcendental unity of apperception" and dressed it up in the terms of functional psychology. Far from settling any problems of cultural life, the effects of this emphasis on the sense of the whole are disastrous upon the consistency and plausibility of his positions.

First. A vicious circle is involved in making man's body the organ of the sense of the whole and then putting the sense of the whole in the primal slime. "Man's sense of the Whole must spring from the Whole whence primordially he sprang" (p. 29). The self must in some way or other be part of the Whole. Later the Whole is spoken of as if it were a product of the imagination (p. 240), a conceptual construction of an ordering consciousness. To overcome dualism the self is converted into an immanent relation of the encompassing Whole; to justify action the self never loses its focal individuality. "I, imaging myself within the Whole, am an illumined focus of myself" (p. 300). This psychological contortionism can only be performed by forgetting that, as Frank uses the term here, there are several meanings denoted by "self," no one of which is recognizable in human behavior.

Second. Since "the terms of a relation are not independent" (p. 249), the self can only know that which is internally related to itself. Since everything can be an object of knowledge, the contents of knowledge are simply the way in which the subject becomes aware of its Wholeness. Frank concludes "The Truth, then, is the Whole. [Shades of Hegel!—S. H.] Human truth is a distinctive articulation or focus of the Whole." But whoever takes a position must take with it its dialectical difficulties! If the truth is the Whole, how does Frank know it, since by definition it is the enunciation of a human truth and hence partial, hence not the whole truth? If the truth is the whole, short of knowledge of the whole, how can the relatively true and false be distinguished, how can *specific* truths be validated? How many meanings has the word "truth" for Frank?

Third and most important. Religion is an expression of the sense of the whole. It is based upon an acceptance of something transcendant which by entering into a relation with man's sense of wholeness loses its terrors for him (p. 26). But ethics is also an expression of the sense of the whole. Frank claims that nothing in which the sense of the whole expresses itself can be antithetical (p. 25). Let us see. Ethics cannot imply an acceptance of a world-whole in its entirety. It is an attempt to re-do, reform or remake existence in some respect. It is active, not acquiescent. Its scale of values is derived from the possibilities of giving direction to the moving forces of the social world. It is an ought-to-be and expresses the logic of imperatives. Religion, for Frank, proceeds in just the opposite fashion. It unifies instead of disrupting; it establishes a wholeness with the order of the world, instead of reorganizing the world to bring it nearer *human desires* and *needs*. *There is a fundamental oppo-*

sition between religion and ethics which Frank overlooks because he sinks them both in the sense of the whole. This opposition is deeper than the opposition between science and religion which likewise escapes Frank's notice. Let the reader glance once more at the first citation adduced from the *Re-Discovery of America*. It is clear now why in the religion of the Whole there can be no talk of "rights" or "justice." The self need not enlist in any cause since in the Whole all true causes are already realized. Frank tries to escape the implications of quietism and surrender by defining ethics as the struggle to realize the principle of Wholeness in one's life (p. 302), thereby contradicting his other metaphysical postulate which states that the Whole is already present in all life, and forgetting that in identifying goodness with the Whole, everything becomes good. *Specific* values and *specific* conflicts disappear in a God who is all goodness, knowledge and behavior. Metaphysics and ethics become one.

II

It was necessary to go to such length in discussing the inadequacies of Frank's metaphysical thinking because two-thirds of his book is devoted to *the* Whole. But we must return to his conception of organic culture revealed by indirection in his criticism of the "facts" of American life. After all, here is where Frank is on home ground and here is where the use of the term "whole" has a specific meaning.

American civilization, says Frank, is a jungle of contradiction, waste, confusion, and poor taste. Sport, sex, politics, technology, news and art have been perverted from their true uses and made into "gods and cults of power." Today "America is a herd longing to become a true society—frantically longing. It is a living plasm, a potential Whole, and it must reach its organic health or rot and die. It strives to achieve this goal of Unity, which is the fruit of love, by exercise of Power" (p. 83). How is America to be brought to organic health? By being integrated into a dynamic cultural hierarchy in which the activities of the various occupational and ethnic groups will contribute the strains in the symphonic pattern of national life (p. 259). Fearfully vague but yet possible. Arguing against Mencken's fury of despair, Frank insists that "America is not an idiot but a neurotic" (p. 231), and hence capable of re-orientation, re-creation. The rebirth of American life will be accomplished not by the exercise of a self-consuming Power but by Love which will overcome Power and make it truly creative (pp. 87-89).

Now whatever Waldo Frank's intentions are, I shall try to show that these general ideas in America *today* are (a) culturally illiberal and (b) socially reactionary. Rejecting the pragmatic view of cultural pluralism (pp. 260-1), Frank is driven *malgré lui* to accept the monistic logic of patrictic Americanism concealed in a difficult formula and definition of Americanism (mystic America). Rejecting the necessity for political reorganization through all available means of *power*—political, industrial, ideological—Frank becomes a positive danger to those forces engaged in challenging the domination of Big Business. His mysticism is too dif-

fuse to be a principle of organization, his lyricism is too personal to stir a group into consciousness of common destiny, and his thinking too inchoate to clearly formulate the problems at issue.

(a) In a country like the United States in which the local cultures of different groups are being devitalized by the pressures making for standardization, emphasis upon a national integrated culture is really an appeal to a principle of cultural *authority*. This principle of authority is at the basis of the feudal and slave economies of which Frank makes so much. Now there is something to be said for a principle of cultural authority when the established tradition it represents is articulate and indigenous. It acts as a critical flywheel against irrational revolt and faddism, and insures the presence of an intellectual continuity in cultural change. But such an established tradition is notoriously absent from the United States. The anemic currents of the intellectual life which calls itself American reflect English traditions that were once vital. Today when we speak of a really organic American culture we speak in terms of prophecy. It is the promise of the future. Frank's own book aims to help bring it about. Such a culture cannot be made. It must grow out of the fundamental processes of social life. These processes may in turn be influenced by the desire or anticipation of such a future culture. But at the *present moment* no one can say what the concrete content of such a culture will definitely be. He cannot predict its specific forms of art. He can only indicate what the necessary conditions for its fulfillment are. He can demonstrate the unlikelihood of producing an organic culture in a money economy in which wealth and sovereignty are too *mobile* to generate the leisure and security requisite for strong intellectual traditions. He can plausibly maintain that either some form of collectivism or benevolent despotism condition its attainment. But no matter what the specific expression of the future culture will be, it will exhibit some continuity with contemporary cultural effort. It might be an adaptation, a development or a synthesis of any or all the tendencies existing in the present chaos of American cultures. Puritan America, Jewish America, Negro America, Slavic, Italian, Scandinavian, German America, might give color or flavor to the future fruit. To reject these cultures *now* in the name of an integrated culture which by hypothesis must arise from a type of social order not yet in existence is to fall victim to a narrow and illiberal perfectionism. Two positions are incumbent upon all who have sincere faith in the possibility of a democratic, integrated culture: First, energies must be devoted to the concrete social problem of reorganizing industry, government and education out of which the flower of the new culture is to grow. Second, until then all cultures existing today are to be encouraged to aspire to free and independent careers of their own unmolested by the demand of patriotic America for conformity or of æsthetic America for a coördinated hierarchy. A fair field to all cultural beginnings, importations, survivals—national or foreign—except to those cultures which by direct principle or indirect implication are hostile to the important task of reconstructing the social environment to serve as the proper carrier of the new organic culture. This means, *e. g.*, uncompromising opposition to the neo-Catholicism of T. S.

Eliot, and I very much fear to the mysticism of Waldo Frank. Whoever wants an organic culture must fight for it on two fronts—against the anarchic social order and against cultural ideologies which defend or justify that order. Among these last there may be forms which satisfy by their own inherent æsthetic power. These are to be preserved if it is possible to disengage them from their anti-social content. Otherwise they become tragic sacrifices of our faith in the new.

The main point, however, that I wish to urge against Frank's cultural theory is that there is no one-to-one correspondence between a cultural Whole and its social environing order. In other words, a cultural Whole is not a true organic totality. Any given society can serve as the basis for more than one ideal fulfillment. At the heart of all cultures there is a certain scheme of values. The direction of the processes of socialization delimit the field of the possible efficacy of values. Whatever values fall outside of this field are not vital. They can find no social root and cannot sustain themselves. But the field is never so narrowly delimited as to *univocally* determine these values and make it unnecessary to choose. Otherwise there would be an antecedent inevitability in the succession of cultures. There are always at least two possible cultural systems which any social order will support. That is what makes human effort in behalf of values significant. These values cannot be synthesized by a too easy assumption of harmony. Not all values can be harmonized. The America of today and tomorrow can equally well support either the culture of Billy Sunday or that of John Dewey, the values of a Gary or the values of a Mumford. The "either-or" here is exclusive, even if not exhaustive of other cultural possibilities. Both sides can invoke the same formula of the Whole that Frank uses. And they do. But the contents are different and irresolvably opposed.

(b) A culture threatened by other cultures or by a social milieu grown hostile must be militant. How much more so a faith in a new culture which must move mountains of tradition and entrenched economic power! It is an open question whether a group with such a faith would do well to even call for a culture that would integrate the ideals of *all* classes today or to emphasize a continuity with the currents of popular tradition. The specific task and situation must decide that. I have been told by some bitter German Spartacus leaders that the street fighting for the control of Berlin in December, 1919, was lost because so many workers left the barricades to spend Christmas with their families. It is not an accident that those who are most active in the struggle to realize the social order which conditions the possibility of a broad, democratic, organic culture, cry for a break with contemporary negative and neutral cultural traditions. That this can be carried to absurdity, the Russian "proletcult" indicates. But what is significant here is the demand for the "fighting value" of the new attitude. It proclaims, "Here are our values which we expect the future organic culture to express. Certain tendencies in the social environment make these values relevant and possible. What practical program must we adopt to render these ideals actual and to nullify the influence of other attitudes which express values incompatible with ours?" Let us now ask, assuming Frank's values to be our own, what

is the "fighting value" of Frank's attitude in America today?

Frank recognizes that property means power (p. 262). The control of wealth by a minority must be replaced by the collective principle of work and welfare. Very good. How is this to be brought about? By a *Whole-creating love,* by a technique of mystical contagion which, starting from the sense of individual personality, extends to a group and then in ever greater concentric sweeps includes the whole social organism. "The burden of the absolute ego is the chief agony of life," and the absolute ego can only be cured of its feverish phantasy in the cooling waters of *the* social Whole. The principle and order of the Whole is *love.* How pathetically futile is the instrumental value of such a love! How banal and worn its formulæ! How inevitably it points to non-resistance! How will this "love" organize the South in the teeth of those who with Christian phrases of love wield the injunction, the lash and the rope? How will this "love" free Mooney and the victims of Centralia? How will this "love" combat politically the influence of Big Business in Congress, the Courts, the Pulpit, the School? How will it raise the standard of living of the American worker? Nay, let the latter be admonished by a prophet in the American wilderness who writes: "When the laborer strains to snatch (*sic!*) as much as he can of the proceeds of the Capitalistic order he is not less passive to that order because he strikes and sabotages" (p. 239). *Until* the socialism desired by Frank arrives, all distribution is "snatching." *Until then* opposition to wage reductions, demands for shorter hours, unemployment insurance, etc., cannot be sanctified by *love* or organic wholeness. Until then we are exhorted to practice forgetting our "rights" and "injustice" in an imagined participation in a non-existent Whole. Practically, I ask, how does this differ from sitting on one's haunches lost in intense contemplation of one's navel? The technique is different, the consequences are the same. It is a voice fresh with rebellion, but the gospel it speaks is the oldest text of social illusion.

"I place the atrophy of our concern in constitutional government among the good signs in our life" (p. 232), asserts Frank, and doubts whether his love-fulfilling group will be concerned in politics at all for a generation (p. 258). As if that atrophy and indifference from the very standpoint of integrated communal health were not the greatest danger to be overcome by a reform group! As if that unconcern did not reflect the *complexities* of administrative processes, the unthinking absorption in rich living rather than in the good life, the surrender of the reins of power to those who have made a business of it! What America needs is not to awaken its sense of the Whole but to develop its *political* sense, its sense of the far-reaching implications of political maneuvers as they reflect and redirect conflicting social interests, its sense of the political struggle as a class struggle, its sense of politics as a branch of social ethics. It is not in the political arena that the battle for the new America will be *won,* but it is there that the storm centers of the new alignment will shock the country into a realization of what is at stake. It is there that most of the preliminary work must be done. Whoever deserts politics in order to weed the garden patch of his own soul may produce an exotic book, a mutual admiration society or a sect. He will never make people see that

political passivity is already a political *choice,* an acceptance of the *status quo.* To be above the battle is to be on the side of the strongest batteries.

Continually in reading Frank I could not help thinking of the career of Moses Hess, the "Communist Rabbi," as the early friend of Karl Marx was called in the stormy forties in Germany. Stirred into social evangelism by the writings of the French socialists, he felt that the new doctrines were too external, too individualistic, too much concerned with bread-and-butter demands, to bring about the regeneration of fallen society. And so he turned to his French comrades and urged them to save their gospel from vulgar materialism by reading Hegel's *Phenomenology* and *Logic.* They were to frame their concrete demands in the light of the "social whole" which Hess conceived to be the key to the thought of Spinoza and Hegel. At home in an excess of revolutionary zeal, he denounced all the liberal shibboleths of representative government and democracy as meretricious and superficial, and called for a religion of social love, with Feurbach, to serve as the solvent of all class divisions. By confusing the minds and hearts of the German liberals he helped lose the Revolution of 1848, although he himself fought valiantly for it. Later he became interested in the Jewish problem.

III

I have left myself little space to do justice to the compensating features of Frank's book. The chapters on "Gods and Cults of Power," "Let's Be Comfortable," "News Is a Toy"; and portions of "Our Current Arts," "Our Censors" and "Our Women" contain the most intelligent and effective criticism of contemporary American life I am acquainted with. They should have been developed at the expense of the metaphysics. In these chapters the Whole does not obtrude itself and the *specific* flaws which Frank detects in the bases of American culture indicates where his greatest gifts lie. In convincing detail, Frank shows that the tragedy of American life consists in the way human purposes are defeated by the mechanisms which have been created to gratify them, the consequent confusion as to what those purposes were and are, the waste and brutality of the pendular rhythm of habit and explosive release, and the drying up of all the vital sources of intellectual activity by the various forms of withdrawal from social life.

There are some profound insights to be gathered in the other parts of the book by those who wish to dig for them. But nowhere have I found any noteworthy passage in which *the* Whole, as distinct from the limited wholes defined by the activities of a purposeful organism, clarifies a situation or even recognizes a genuine problem.

It is an impertinence to tell an author what kind of a book he should have written. But it is the duty of a critic to tell the author whether he has succeeded in writing the book he intended to write. The *Re-Discovery of America* is not what its sub-title proclaims it to be "An Introduction to a Philosophy of *American*[1] Life." Nor can it very well be—as Waldo Frank must himself admit when he reflects on the ineffability of *the* Whole.

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[1] My italics.

A LETTER FROM WALDO FRANK

DEAR CALVERTON:

WHEN I received your letter telling me that you were sending me a polemical essay on *The Re-Discovery* by an American teacher of philosophy, I found myself rejoicing. There have been plenty of thoughtful, even profound, articles written on this book; but far too few are by Americans. I have missed luminous criticism in the place where it serves most—at home. But when I read Mr. Hook's paper, I was disappointed. I don't quite see how I can "answer" it, since for the most part it is irrelevant. Mr. Hook scarcely *connects* with my book at all. Therefore, even the interesting things he says in the latter part of his essay—with many of which I agree—have slight cogency as a critique of my work.

An adverse criticism of a book can be economically answered, when there is a common ground from which the disagreement arises. This common ground, of course, must be what the book *says*. In this paper, this common ground is wanting. The only way in which I could adequately answer Mr. Hook would therefore be to restate my thesis in its entirety: *i. e.,* rewrite my book, in order to reveal his irrelevant or tangential or blind conclusions. Moreover, it is plain that Mr. Hook is by his temperament excluded from the premised experience of such work as mine—an experience which, in the first place, is immediate and intuitive. Men like Mr. Hook cannot understand men like me. When they "report" us, quite innocently they maim us, because quite literally they cannot read us. There is small profit for either of us in wrangling with him.

Yet you insist that I *should* answer: particularly the accusation that my ideas are "culturally illiberal and socially reactionary." Very well. Let us see what can be done in a brief space . . .

(a) Mr. Hook begins by attacking my premise of the Whole. He relates it with the Absolute of 19th century German idealism, and that is enough in his judgment to condemn it as nonsense. Putting aside the provincialism of this attitude, I confine myself to observing that Mr. Hook utterly ignores the heart of my book, which establishes the *premised inadequacy* of any doctrine (be it metaphysical, religious, political, economic), the *premised falseness* of any dogma, and the *necessity of a method of action* to make any concept true, any "whole" real. Ignoring my dynamic definitions, he falls into the amateurish error of confusing my philosophy with Hess, Kant, Hegel and the Upanishads. (Of course,

I share with these and with innumerable others the intuition of the unitary nature of life—which Mr. Hook completely lacks.) He ignores my exposure of the dualisms inherent in the wholes of medieval Catholicism, Buddhism, etc.—dualisms which vitiated their very premise of wholeness. He ignores my reiteration that the human whole is not even metaphysically *being*, save as it is personally-socially enacted. He ignores that the Knowledge and Whole which I define are, of essence, incompatible with the social forms that have prevailed in classic, medieval and modern Europe—being incompatible with the attitude toward life on which these forms are founded. He ignores—in a word—the book about which he attempts to write.

(b) The experience of wholeness, the experience of life as an organism continuous with the experience of self, is totally wanting to Mr. Hook. Therefore, he is blind to the essence and substance of my book: the proposition that this experience (and this experience alone) transfigures the individual who has it, *provided he evolves a technique whereby this experience becomes the matrix of his everyday behavior;* thus changing his vision, his values, literally his self, and recreating him into a potential factor of a transfigured social order.

(c) He caricatures (by taking out of the context) the statement that from the standpoint of the necessity of the Whole, there is no injustice; and thus distorts my book into an apologia for social submission or personal quietism (despite my proof of the fallacy of quietism). This he does because he fails to understand that the "righting of wrongs" can be constructive—real—only if the individual force which does the "righting" embraces the source from which the wrongs have sprung and of which all ego-impulse, all separatist will (however specifically injured), are as well the product. A social revolution which is not energised, finally, by harmonious contact with all human forces—and thus made a true control—will merely replace one set of wrongs by another. Even Marx, who, heaven knows, was no profound metaphysician, saw the inevitability of the Capitalistic order and hence the lack of "injustice" in its ineluctable workings. But Mr. Hook is so simplistic that he believes that a constructive new order can be established by producing a homogeneous world-mood—and annulling every spirit which does not find its ultimate expression in the "barricade." He does not see that whereas the emotional-destructive work is needed (and there is nothing in my book to deny this need), it must, itself, be contained and composed within a constructive experience and a constructive vision.

(d) Mr. Hook grieves that the "same formula of the Whole that Frank uses" can be evoked by apologists of the social-economic order which we both condemn; by reactionary capitalists, for instance. This is the crux of his argument that my book is "illiberal and reactionary." And, of course, in so far as by "formula" is meant doctrine or dogma in the classic sense, Mr. Hook is right. And my book states clearly how men have "believed" in the Whole (of Aquinas or Hegel, for instance) and supported a Roman or a Prussian tyrant; how men have "known" the Whole in the classic rational-religious way, and gone on perpetuating by their deeds a society of hideous chaos. But Mr. Hook quite fails to

see that in precisely the same way men might "believe" in communism, "set up" the economic-social forms of a communistic order, yet go on living in hideous disorder—perpetuating a social and personal life in which the separatisms, dualisms and egoisms explicit in Capitalism found other forms—or merely other names. The apologists of Capitalism, recognizing this, make it the basis of their attack on the ideal of social revolution. "Man will be just as greedy and anarchic," they say, "under a different order; therefore, let Capitalism, the *social rationale* of individual chaos, prevail." Which is a stupid way to argue. And which is precisely the way of Mr. Hook, when he says: "Men with a doctrine or a religion of the Whole may still support the capitalistic chaos. Therefore, down with the nonsense of the Whole; and let pragmatism or infinite pluralism, which is the rationale of social chaos, prevail."

(e) The kind of person, the kind of group, I envisage, far from being lost as to individuality, in the American mass, or succumbing to the external authority of a separatistic church or a rigid constitution, must move organically into the kind of action that will tend basally to transform society. The timely use of force in such a process is a detail which a book, introducing first principles, could not elaborate. And the fact that this detail absorbs Mr. Hook reveals the level of his thinking. But, of course, a society transformed by this dynamic transformation of its personal, social and conceptual factors will be transformed indeed; since the integers that compose it have, by true biological analogy, evolved the whole which their own "cellular" activity projected.

(f) To believe that society can be transfigured without transfiguring the dead psychic patterns which have evolved the social structure which makes revolution necessary is näive Utopianism. I have shown elsewhere how näive thinking and soft-feeling invariably underly the processes of these "hard-headed" enemies of the mystic.

(g) Finally, Mr. Hook has been in such a hurry for the Utopia that his good heart yearns for that he has ignored the last third of the book: a discussion of the necessity of methods and technique, social and personal, whereby the discrepancies he bewails between doctrine and actualization can be avoided. For the same dualism (men being what they are) which made it inevitable in the past that "Christians" should act like monkeys might well in the future (men still being what they are) make "communists" act like monkeys . . .

I regret that I did not make it more clear in my book that by my hypothetic group's deferment of political action for a generation, I was not denying the necessity of such action. What I meant, of course (and I hope I was wrong), was that the rigidity of our political forms, and the superficiality of our revolutionary movement make political action *at present* impossible as the embodiment of any basic principle for American life. But, although I did not stress this point, it is plain to any careful reader.

Sincerely yours,

WALDO FRANK.

THE MONETARY CONTROL OF LITERATURE

BY OAKLEY JOHNSON

A. *To begin with, literature is a money-making business.*

THE curious reader may have noticed in the last few years that Congress and the courts have given attention to a peculiar matter called "intellectual property," trying to decide just how such property should be taxed and to what extent it might be transferred or bequeathed.[1] He might have noticed Spengler's argument that title to intellectual property should be just as complete as title to real or personal property, and that therefore the heirs of our Shakespeares and George Eliots should receive royalties on their writings generation after generation, just as the heirs of our Rothschilds and Rockefellers have received and will continue to receive the incomes of their estates.

In whatever way this matter is decided, it is clear that "intellectual property" is an actual commodity. The word "property" does not here mean "quality," as in the expression, "the properties of calcium chloride," nor does it mean, figuratively, a "mental possession," as in the phrase, "a mind rich in memories." It means literally a form of material wealth, which, like land or shoes, has been produced or acquired and is bought and sold. Books are the product of the literary *business*, and by "monetary control" we might mean, apparently, the monetary *remuneration* that writers receive.

And, we may as well ask, why not? Literature, like war and shoemaking, has always been a means of livelihood to certain people. That some have been failures at it is not surprising. From the time of *Deor's Lament* for the loss of his patron and Chaucer's *Compleint to His Empty Purse* (designed to encourage a patron's generosity) down to George Sterling's *The Black Hound Bays* (a comment on certain editorial standards), literature has been a business, and frequently a gamble.[2] It was patronage in the old days that gave or withheld success, and now it is the publisher, the editor, the advertiser, the censor—and even the owner of the paper mill[3] and the president of the bank. There are "interlock-

[1] "*Rights of Authors*," *Outlook*, April 28, 1926, and "*Copyright Controversy*," *Library Journal*, September 1 to October 1, 1926.

[2] Joseph Addison wrote a poem while still in college for which the Whigs gave him a pension which allowed him to travel on the Continent for four years; then he wrote them another campaign poem which got him a political job.

[3] "*Who Should Own Newspapers?*" *The New Republic*, May 15, 1929, and "*Myth of a Free Press*," *The Nation*, May 15, 1929.

ing directorates"—not to speak of psychological interlockings—and various other complex financial relationships. Literature is a part of "big business" in this printing machine age.

It is not difficult to point to social dangers in the monetary division of classes, dangers that affect society in respect to all businesses—shoemaking, doctoring, writing. Literature has the same social inter-relationships as other businesses, with the same kind of financial basis.

Notwithstanding all this, we must admit that there is a justifiable monetary control which enforces better quality in the product. If a shoemaker makes inferior shoes, he will suffer a loss of trade, and if a poet cannot write a passable sonnet, he also will be unable to sell his stuff (though he may find a gullible editor who will take it, who in his turn will find gullible readers, just as the shoemaker may find easy marks). Not always, to be sure, does demand in either field result from satisfactory supplying, for advertising can make values grow where not much grew before. But in any case the problem is one of craftsmanship and of business and literary judgment, and, so far as these comparisons show, social reform has exactly the same task in the business of making and selling sonnets as of making and selling shoes.

B. *However, literature is more than a money-making business—and there's the rub.*

But social reform would be comparatively simple if literature had *only* the limited social relationhsips that shoemaking has. The most rudimentary contemplation cannot fail to result in the suspicion that literature has far more meaning. It embodies and determines opinions, beliefs, cosmic conceptions, ethical ideals; it delights us, inspires us, thrills us. In literature is bound up the *humanness* and the divinity of the race.

The question that therefore faces us is: does the fact that literature has this spiritual significance make possible *another* kind of monetary control of it *in addition* to that exercised over other businesses, a kind of control at once dangerous and degrading?

And, if this is true, how and to what extent is literature so controlled?

C. *In this juncture certain honest critics have jumped at conclusions too hastily.*

Such an investigation ought to be based on a careful analysis of what is attempted and on an honest inspection of many kinds of "intellectual property," for a sufficient amount of doctrinaire and slapdash criticism has already been written to satisfy preliminary needs. The first such step is suggested by Upton Sinclair's classifying together, in *Money Writes,* of the novels of Henry James and the pre-war secret treaties[4]—that the first were published and the second suppressed (by all but one newspaper) for the sake of capitalist financial advantage. Upton Sinclair has done a great deal for literature and for society, and his literary immortality cannot be overthrown by pointing out—now rather than later—his enthusiastic mistakes. One such mistake, I think, lies in the failure to differentiate between even such unlike "writings" as the secret treaties and James's novels. We must in scientific honesty consider their

[4] *Money Writes.* (Pages 42 and 54.)

differences of conception and purpose, even if we show, possibly, that "money wrote" both.

With respect to the social nature of its content, literature may thus be named controversial or imaginative. Controversial literature includes, broadly speaking, the pronunciamentos of opposing political parties and groups, editorials and argumentative articles in periodicals, speeches in Congress and in political campaigns, sermons and legal addresses and "educational" lectures, pamphlets and tracts and treatises. To point out that these are money-controlled is almost tautological to us now, and ought always to have been so—for controversial literature is by definition in support of one group and in opposition to all others, and will have the combined monetary backing of the group it favors and the combined monetary antagonism of all others. However much we may favor a free press in principle, we cannot fail to understand perfectly the motives underlying official war propaganda, political censorship, big business suppression of unfavorable news, the Christian Science boycott of biographies of Mrs. Eddy, the Roman Catholic "index," Bolshevik sidetracking of outside capitalist "educational" attempts, British insistence, as a condition for renewed recognition of Soviet Russia, on the cessation of Soviet propaganda. That *controversial* literature is definitely money-controlled (at least for the purposes of the present essay) is to be granted outright.

The essential problem in respect to monetary control of controversy is the old one of free speech and a free press. Social health in a free society would be best served by the most free expression possible of conflicting ideas, but in a society controlled by a dominant class there is bound to be, regardless of "constitutional provisions," a double repression: direct and obvious, by way of political and financial pressure; indirect and unrealized; by way of schools and newspapers.

D. *This is not the first time that over-emphasis plus omission have equalled error.*

There is, therefore, no controversy about the literature of controversy—so far as its monetary control is concerned. What may be doubted, and frequently is doubted, is whether imaginative literature also is money-controlled, directly or indirectly, either by being forced into certain idea-patterns or by simple suppression. It is important to center discussion on imaginative literature, not only because it is here that disagreement exists, but because it is imaginative literature that is in the long run of most account *as literature*. Controversial writing is largely ephemeral, important as historical record chiefly; imaginative literature survives and is handed down—if of the quality that sticks in society's memory—as "art." Is this kind of literature also controlled by money?

Upton Sinclair arrives at an affirmative conclusion in regard to Henry James by analyzing his work in the following way: James showed in detail

> "what had happened in the way of a sexual intrigue between two of his characters twenty years ago, and . . . the writhings and twistings of the souls of these characters while the old guilty secret was coming out . . . As with everything else in the modern world, it remained a mystery until I came to study economics, and realized that under the bourgeois law such old scandals determine property rights. It is upon property that

> bourgeois society is built, and it is property that decides whether people are worthy of having their scandals pried into and exposed by great geniuses like Mrs. Humphrey Ward and Henry James."

But interest in sexual intrigue antedated bourgeois society, we may be sure, by very many years, and doubtless such interest will continue long after our present economic order has been superseded. Interest in sexual intrigue depends primarily on sex feeling. To be sure, the extent and type of such interest, and the varieties of sex intrigue we are interested in, are determined by the prevailing mores ,and these in turn are modified by economic conditions. But of whatever form, however complicated by other elements, the interest in sex subjects is interest in *sex*, not in money.

True, sex may be prostituted for money, and so may ability to write. But Sinclair's objection to the sex-interest in James's stories is quite possibly as capitalistic as anything in James, for it is based, at bottom, on a prudish moral code which, on his own theory, came in with private property. It is odd—and not very reassuring, when we stop to think what it means—to find socialist writers accusing capitalism of both prudishness and decadence with nonchalant illogic—prudishness on the ground that inheritance of property demands marital chastity, decadence on the ground that inheritance of property results in idleness and satanism. The workers for a new social order should not thus confuse issues, toy with half-arguments, lose golden opportunities to build up an impregnable foundation.

E. *But one must not forget that there is something monetary in Denmark—*

That writers, like politicians, may be corrupted is obvious. Sinclair has shown that something has gone wrong with the normal development of writers like George Kibbe Turner, Harry Leon Wilson, and Nina Wilcox Putnam. Whether the change in their social viewpoint was the result of insidious mental poisoning or outright bribery, the result has been the same—a cramming of crude pro-capitalist propaganda into current fiction.

That such propaganda does a deal of harm to movements for social progress is undoubted, though it is likely that much of the harm is done before the fiction is written, by reason of the many other socially reactionary influences in society. But most of such fiction is worthless from the literary standpoint of capable critics, including those who are not socialists. It is short-lived and its influence on influential thinkers is, I think, less than is supposed—less, probably, than the influence of regular advertising. Furthermore, there is a considerable quantity of counter-propaganda in fiction, although Sinclair seems to think that the plutocracy has now thoroughly sewed up the whole writing clan. In a paragraph on Robert Herrick, he tells of the uncomplimentary picture of leisure-class society that Herrick draws, and says:

> "You can see how that meant the undermining of bourgeois idealism, and how necessary it became for those who control our cultural life to put up their money and buy out the magazines which were furnishing such reading matter to the masses of the people."

But Theodore Dreiser and Sinclair Lewis and numbers of others are furnishing equally uncomplimentary pictures of upper-class society, and manage to find publishers. Erich Remarque, Richard Aldington, and John Dos Passos have been uncomplimentary to war, and recent Russian writers, whose works have been translated into English, have been uncomplimentary to the entire capitalist order.

In fact, the existence of propaganda in fiction is so normal and so inevitable and, on the whole, so varied in point of view that it is a question whether it will do much good to oppose the practice. One may justifiably attack the particular propaganda in a particular book, simply because he objects to the thing propagated, but have little to gain from attacking the existence of fictional propaganda in general. Especially is this true when one considers that often fictional material, especially realistic fiction, may have propaganda value *under certain conditions and at certain crises,* although the material was not so intended and at another time would not be so regarded. A plain, objective narrative of life in the Kentucky mountains or in North Carolina textile mills might at the present time be effective testimony against Methodism or against capitalism. As Professor George E. Woodberry says of fiction:

> "It is a powerful means for the spread of information of all kinds and for the propagation of ideas; all knowledge is most interesting when given out in the form of imagination, and the demand for knowledge was never so great as now; it is altogether natural that the novel, the most flexible form of writing for imaginative propaganda, should be the preferred modern form of literature."[5]

Perhaps we may congratulate ourselves on possessing this literary form which is so well adapted to our intellectual-artistic needs. Perhaps we may safely allow the merry dance of novel-writing to continue its zigzag way, only insisting as strongly as we can, and with increasing strength, that rebel and unconventional writers somehow get a hearing.

F. *Merely because there is not a dollar sign on every violet petal.*

The fact that imaginative literature may have propagandistic content, or content of propagandist possibility, does not mean that its content is entirely a matter of monetary "control," direct or indirect, reactionary or rebellious. Margaret Widdemer can write indignant poems about *The Factory,* with social relationships as the theme, but MacKnight Black can write of *Machinery* with the same sort of ecstatic non-sociological content that Shelley had in writing of *The Skylark.* Shelley himself can write *The Mask of Anarchy,* a terrific anti-tyranny poem, and Robert Herrick (the 17th century one) can write:

> "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
> Old Time is still a-flying,
> And this same flower that smiles today,
> Tomorrow will be dying."[6]

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[5] *The Appreciation of Literature.* (page 109.)
[6] Note also the same author's *His Poetry His Pillar.*

To talk of a *direct* "monetary control" of this poem is pure nonsense—although of course Herrick was not free from the subtle economic ("Cavalier") influences of his period—and so would it be about much fiction. To say that writers are controlled by money, because controlled negatively, if they restrict themselves, or are restricted by their market, to *only non-sociological themes*—on the supposition that they do not wish to fall in with the desired attitude in the treatment of sociological themes—is just in so far as it is true, but it does not fully cover the argument. The point that must be sufficiently understood and properly dealt with is that not social and class themes alone, but love and death and the brevity of life are also themes, and they are a part of the nature and destiny of man, not merely of a recently established and probably temporary form of social structure. Nothing but confusion and, in the end, inglorious retraction can result from over-assertion and attempts to prove more than is either necessary or true.

G. *The dollar sign on American literature is writ large—on its inferiority.*

But, when all is said and written, there remain, primarily, the fact that imaginative literature is indeed subject to a varied and complicated money-determinism, and, incidentally, the additional fact that American literature is as a whole markedly inferior to European literature. Incidentally, we say, bringing up in this soft-voiced fashion the subject of American literary inferiority. But this inferiority is neither doubtful nor without cause. The two facts may have more than an accidental relation. We need not dwell on odious comparisons of Dreiser with Galsworthy (or Thomas Mann), of Sinclair Lewis with H. G. Wells (or Knut Hamsun), of Edith Wharton with Virginia Woolf (or Selma Lagerlof).[7] We can proceed at once to ask what relationship, if any, exists between the comparatively low achievements of American writing and the rather high achievements of American finance.

As a preliminary to this final topic, we can safely accept the following summary of literary conditions in America, relevant to economic control: first, there is plenty of propaganda in imaginative literature, especially in fiction; second, the moneyed classes control and direct most of this propaganda, partly by direct demanding, editorially, of writing with a pro-capitalist slant, partly by refusal, editorially, to accept or publish writing without such slant or with a contrary slant; third, the movies, the large circulation magazines, and the publishers of popular book fiction, equipped with vast publicity and advertising means, have an overwhelming and indeed a crude reliance on this pro-capitalist editorial policy; fourth, a great majority of writers have fallen and are falling into a compliance with this state of affairs; fifth, the public generally, and the working-class public particularly, are politically too naïve to recognize and resent the over-obvious and trashy art they are given.

For this is of course the result, critically viewed—literary trash. Writers representing the dominant class have not developed artistic sophistication and finesse, for indeed they have no opposition, and only a sheep-

[7] "*The All Star Literary Vaudeville*": Edmund Wilson. *The New Republic*, June, 1926.

like public. Writers representing the under class are few, or are shut off by the regulated demand, or are fearful, or are traitorous. Our wealthy class, with greater wealth than any other upper class in history, and with apparently greater ability to produce a superior literature, have emasculated themselves artistically by so completely suppressing the opposition. That we lack the traditionary past of European literatures is not sufficiently true to account for *all* our literary sterility, for we have *their* past, if we would use it. But our capitalist domination is so thoroughly complete, and revolutionary thought is so minutely ferreted out and suppressed, that a large part of our theme-material is unused, and the incentive for subtle workmanship is very much reduced.

Here, then, is where a partial cause of American literary inferiority lies, to a considerable degree. The American public has but little *consciousness* of a class conflict. While in Europe there is in each country a strong working-class political movement, with parliamentary representation and political influence, there is in America a very weak movement, with no parliamentary representation and practically no influence. In European countries there is a working-class market for literature, and enough awareness of class interests to make literary criticism alert to social implications and keen to attack logical weaknesses and crudities in fiction and verse which deals, however indirectly, with controversial data.[8]

The result is that literature in Europe, whether "proletarian" or "bourgeois," has been compelled to develop a subtlety, a precision of style, and a sophistication of viewpoint entirely alien to American literature from *The Saturday Evening Post* upward. We have not developed an upper class culture comparable to European upper class culture, not so much because we have not a cultural tradition as because we *have no need* for a culture like that. Our proletariat can be intellectually dominated without it.

American capitalists have done too good a job in making democracy safe for themselves. This, in part, is why literature in America is so inexcusably inferior to European, especially to British, literature. We are scarcely likely to have a fully mature literature until we have a strong political movement of the working class.

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[8] "It is futile to argue that a class must be in power before it can influence a social culture." "*The Sociological Aesthetics of the Bolsheviki*": V. F. Calverton. *The American Journal of Sociology.*

ALFRED ADLER, PANACEA-IST

BY WILHELM STEKEL

(Translated from the German by Frida Illmer)

WE scorn the physician who claims to have found a panacea for all ills and we laugh at the locksmith who advertises one key to fit every lock. "What is good for one is not good for all," is the pithy utterance of a great poet, and in it is to be found a form of wisdom that can be applied to philosophy as well as religion, medicine as well as law, sports as well as sex. The psychotherapist alone, in his fanatic blindness, claims to have found the philosopher's stone. Today one psychotherapist declares himself in a position to trace all nervous disturbances to the "birth trauma." Another beholds in every illness the castration of the Œdipus complex. A third "healer" believes every neurosis to be but an escape from duty. Still another has seized upon lack of religious faith as the root of all nervous ills. But Adler, the founder of *Individualpsychologie,* has gone even further and discovered that all conflicts can be traced to the existence of an inferiority complex. And with this key to our souls he hopes to unlock the secret of all neuroses.

The name which Adler exploits for his doctrine, Individual Psychology, is badly chosen. A much more fitting title would be Universal Psychology, since, as with the bed of Procrustus, any individual can be made to fit into its frame. Besides, the Will to Power, the striving for supremacy, and the sense of inferiority, can be found in all of us. Perhaps they are right in their way, these psychoanalysts and psychotherapists. The difficulty is that they see the psyche always from one point of view—their own. They forget that human psyches differ as greatly from each other as do human bodies, and that no two of them are every wholly alike. Let me cite but one case to show how neatly Adler over-simplifies his proofs. I could cite dozens of such illustrations, if I cared. I could write a book against this book, for, in his profound onesidedness, Adler has succeeded in mixing truth and fallacy so thoroughly that it is difficult to distinguish where the false ends and the true begins.

But now let us examine the remarkable case by which Adler attempts to prove that depression tends to heighten a feeling of superiority:

A man of fifty, of a generally happy disposition, frequently felt unhappy in situations in which he should have been happy. (Such a reaction I ordinarily call a "paradox reaction.") At one time, for instance, while occupying a private box at a theatre with his wife and children, he was suddenly seized by a shudder. He recalled with sadness his former friend who, at the age of twenty-five, had died from the effects of lues. This friend had been his rival not only in business, but he had also asked for the hand of our patient's wife. He had failed in every respect wherein

the patient had been successful. His death had eliminated the rivalry. But our patient had a domineering wife on his hands who persistently resorted to sickness as her final trump, outwitting her husband always by affecting illness.

So Adler concludes:[1]

> "His depressions were an attempt to show himself superior to his wife. To be depressed in very favorable situations called attention to his good fortune much more than if he had allowed himself to enjoy them. Everyone was surprised at his depressions and he constantly asked himself, 'You happy being, *why* are you depressed when you have everything you want?' The unmanageable wife was the one sorrow in his comfortable life, and he compensated for this *by remembering his victory* in the most difficult phase of his history—when he outstripped his friend and won the woman from him. Loyalty forbade to rejoice in the memory of his dead friend; but he could nevertheless feed upon this ancient triumph by being depressed in the box of the theatre. The more melancholy he was and the brighter the occasion, the more was he able to think of his past conquest and to elevate the consciousness of his estate."

Without reading further, we are already compelled to shake our heads. Do we triumph by misfortune? Is not all our striving a search after happiness and would it not have been much more natural for our patient had he triumphed by proving that he was happy, indeed happier than anyone else at the theatre? I halted at this point of the account and reflected, "The patient is thinking of his friend, because he is unhappy with his wife. He is regretful because it was not his friend who had married this intolerably domineering woman. Such regrets would be in place." But another explanation has been found. Adler concludes his report:

> "Deeper inquiries confirmed my conclusion. His friend died from paralysis after syphilis, a disease which they *both* contracted at the same time. My patient was cured, however; and now, surrounded by his healthy wife and six children, could but recall, together with the triumph over his friend, his conquest of the disease."

Hinc illæ lacrimæ! His friend had died of paralysis! At the height of his happiness he must dread the fate of his friend. Is it not possible that he, too, may some day die of paralysis?

Why resort to his striving for superiority in this case? Why insert a highly improbable thesis, if it is most probable that he—like most patients who have been cured of syphilis—is pursued by the fear that he must eventually pay the price? Must we always seek for one motive only, if life offers thousands of others? Is the human soul really so barren that it can be reduced to one single formula? Are there no other conflicts in our lives than the Will to Power?

Behind every neurosis Adler senses the evasion of a decision, an invented obstacle. Take, for instance, the case of a girl who always falls in love with married men, thus preserving her virginity. She reasons in the following manner: "If this man were not married, I would marry

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[1] Alfred Adler: *Problems of Neurosis.* With a prefatory essay by F. G. Crookscank. Edited by Philippe Mairet. Cosmopolitan Book Corporation, New York, 1930.

him!" Thus she avoids wedlock. But must we assume at once that the fear of surrendering in marriage is the only motive behind her flight from men? I know of cases in which an earlier incestuous act with the patient's brother, father, or grandfather had led her to pose as if she desired marriage while in reality she eluded it. Adler, however, pronounces his oracular dictum:

> "'If' is usually the *leit-motiv* of the neurotic drama. 'If' is the last resort in every neurotic dilemma, and the only way of escape. For *the will to escape* there is only *one* reason, and that is fear of defeat, which is the hardest of all reasons to admit. At this point, therefore, we frequently find some fictitious form of anxiety, which the patient interprets to himself variously but never truly—never, that is, as the simple fear of being beaten."

What an absurd exaggeration! I am at present treating a patient who is suffering from an inferiority complex and who honestly admits his fear of defeat. In spite of this, however, he is pursued by fears that frequently arise at night, forcing him to pace the streets for hours. Is he trying to prove his superiority in this fashion? Hardly. His acts are not a dramatic display for the benefit of his family. Does he wish to impress himself? He does not know that he harbors a criminal in his soul and is seeking escape from himself. His first attack occurred when, at the age of twelve, he looked in the mirror and beheld a strange face, the face of a criminal! We are involuntarily reminded of Oscar Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Grey*.

But let us see how Adler generalizes from his observations:

> "Agaraphobia, anxiety neurosis, and all forms of phobia may originate at this point. But, whichever it may be, it fulfills its purpose of blocking the way to further activity. Thus what was desired is attained—namely, the ordeal is evaded without disclosing, even to its owner, the hated feeling of inferiority. *All the other* neurotic symptoms, such as neurotic heart, headaches, migraine, and so on, develop out of the severe tension of this very difficult concealment."

Here, then, is the universal key to the riddle of neurosis! And it is this tone which Adler continues throughout his book. We cannot help but marvel at the remarkable finesse with which the author makes each case fit his hypothesis. Whether the patient can be helped with this hypothesis or not is another question. Adler and his disciples will refer, no doubt, to their successful cases. But a few successful cases prove nothing at all. *We could learn much more from their failures.* But these failures Adler neglects to report. If we were to accept his logic, the prospect is in every way roseate. Adler's theory, which is simple and easy to understand, can be briefly summarized in the following sentence: "Conquer your inferiority, find courage, and you will be healed."

It would be interesting to draw parallels between Adler and Couè. I shall resist this temptation, however. I have devoted my last thirty years to the psychology of neurosis, and Adler and I have sat together at the feet of our master, Freud, a fact which Adler would like to forget today. I can merely repeat, "What Adler is giving to the world is but a small portion of the psychology of neurosis, and often enough it is but a distorted fragment." The conclusions of a psychotherapist depend

greatly upon his own philosophic outlook and emotional disposition. It would be easy to draw conclusions about Adler from his book. What a consuming striving for supremacy must move him, the founder of Individual Psychology! He once dared to assert, "In twenty years there will be only individual psychology!" What daring! Who today can be so audacious as to predict what part of all that is being written and which has been written about the psychology of neurosis will still be the common treasure of science, twenty years hence?

The neurotic problem resembles the Theban sphynx, who devoured the suitors that could not solve her riddle. To be sure, those who prefer to be hypocritically evasive of the power of the sex-impulse will gladly hail Adler's theories. It would be a tempting piece of work to analyze some of our individual-psychologists and to prove through them the existence of the very Freudian complexes which they have banished from their books. Have they succeeded as well in banishing them from their souls?

ON A BABY BORN DEAD

What sudden gust of chance has tossed you,
So frail a curving petal—
What undecided wind has blown you
On this dull earth to settle?

Why lengthen misery and bleed in
A wild and long-lost battle?
Your birth-gasp is another pitch of
A dying man's death-rattle!

With mute, unfathomable language,
Your fleeting word is said here:
Your greatest happiness in life is
To have been born dead here!

—Louis Ginsberg.

THE FALL OF A FAIR CONFEDERATE

ANONYMOUS

THERE was a time when I thrilled at the sight of the Stars and Bars, when my heart skipped a beat at the sound of "Dixie," and when to carry a venerable Confederate colonel in my car at the head of the Old Soldiers' Parade at our annual Old Settlers' Reunion filled me with pride. A time when I was a thoroughgoing Negrophobe, a believer in the superiority of my white skin, in the preciousness of my white womanhood, in the gallantry of Southern white men, and the mental and spiritual inferiority of all people with dark skins. Sentiments eminently befitting the daughter of a cotton and cattle baron whose money was made out of the toil of black people.

And yet, here am I, at the age of thirty, happily married to a man of the so-called inferior race. A man so dark that our children will be russet or deep topaz. And so completely changed am I that the prospect delights me. As well as I am able to untangle it, here is how and why I fell from grace.

I think it began with the fact that I had a Negro man for a nurse. Each morning, instead of being trundled about in a baby carriage, Jim, our six-foot ebony groom, took me astride his horse and trotted leisurely along the country roads with me holding onto the saddle horn. And later he taught me those very necessary accomplishments of the Southwest—how to shoot, to skin a 'possum, to ride a bronco, and rope a cow. Jim had grown up in our family, and no one thought it strange that he should look after me. But if one is to believe Freud, one forms one's adult sexual preferences out of the father, mother, or nurse image impressed on one as an infant. (Note the popularity of "Mammy" songs in America.) So it may be that I was "doomed" from the cradle.

I know that when I grew into adolescence I preferably spent more time in the company of the Negroes than in the society of my parents. I preferred sitting in our large, airy kitchen with the honeysuckle and wisteria vines poking into the windows, amid pleasant odors of baking and frying, listening to the sardonic comments on life which were flung out in a running repartee between Jim, Linky the cook and Bup our long-legged black houseboy, to hearing the musty platitudes soberly pronounced by my mother and her friends in our marble and mahogany parlor. I particularly liked Monday, which was wash day, for then Linky would help Rhoda, who was washing under the big live oak in the back yard. The clean scent of the lye-soap boiling in the pot, the acrid odor of burning twigs under the pot, the bed and table linen flapping on the line, dazzlingly white in the sunshine, and the two robust Negresses standing over

their tubs of hot suds in the cool shade—all seemed very beautiful and interesting to me. And in the course of the day callers would invariably drop by. Uncle Bob, the octoroon butcher who was half-brother of one of our former mayors; Little Varney, the iceman who knew everything that went on in our town; Ivory, who wanted to be a preacher and who, though illiterate, could chant whole chapters from the Bible; Uncle Varney, a stately old ex-slave, part Cherokee Indian, who had seventy years before helped to lay out the plans of our town and build the first house; and Lou-Vánilla, as black as the ace of spades, a vender of skin-whitening lotions and the mistress of one of our leading white citizens. I admired the gayety and energy of our washerwomen more than I did the prim elegance of the Ladies of the First Families and I enjoyed the salty way in which their callers sized up life. I had rather hear Jim sing "Alabama Bound"—

> O, babe, don't go leave me here
> Without a cent fo' beer

than to listen to the classical music of Miss Block, our local music teacher. And yet, along with these preferences went a firm and arrogant belief in the superiority of my race. When a Negro was burned in a neighboring county, I heatedly argued with Linky that it was right and proper for white men to take the law into their own hands where Negroes were concerned. However, shortly after this, Jim was shot and killed by a white man. He had been sent to get a horse from one of my father's white renters. The man did not want to give up the horse, and when Jim insisted he grabbed his shotgun and shot Jim in the back. The only witness to the murder was another Negro, who was not allowed to testify at the trial. The day the case came up all the poor whites in the county came to town carrying weapons and corn liquor and made a holiday of the farcical trial. The defendant was acquitted in five minutes by a jury of the same class. I asked my father why he did not testify. He knew that Jim was of good character and that the renter was a confirmed Negro hater. He replied that it would be bad for his business for him to take a Negro's side. The affair shocked me profoundly. Before, when I had made sweeping statements about the Negro, I had had a sort of stereotype of the race in mind created out of the myth of black brutality and rapine and contrasted to an equally false stereotype of the Noble White created out of the necessity to justify the ethics of a Slavocracy. Since neither Jim nor his murderer fitted these traditional norms, the affair destroyed my belief in the innate nobility of the white man and made me suspect that there was something rotten in the State of Texas.

However, I still bristled with race prejudice, as will soon be seen. I was sent to California to complete my education. One day shortly after my arrival, a colored woman seated herself beside me on the street car. I, who had often sat upon Linky's lap, rose and marched indignantly to another seat. And the first time I went to the theatre and perceived a colored man in the audience I was so irritated that I could not look at the performance. But apparently my revulsion was simply shock at a new custom and not due to any innate aversion to public contact with the darker race, for soon both seemed natural enough occurrences and

protests of other Southerners to the same thing now seemed to me a bit provincial. Perhaps being young and in my formative period, I was quick to accept new situations and abide by them.

But when a young colored man entered my literature class at school I was dumbfounded. My first impulse was to make some queenly gesture of disapproval, but I recalled the street car incident and how I had survived that and hesitated, secretly fearing I should be making a spectacle of myself. Moreover, I was extremely curious as to what the young man would do and how he would recite. I soon found that he did quite well and recited brilliantly. I was greatly astonished and a little relieved, too, for I had thought that it was going to be very painful watching a poor primitive mind struggle with Shakespeare and Goethe. But it seemed no strain upon the young man at all, which, of course, did not fit in with my traditional beliefs, and another layer of prejudice began to crumble. I never met the young man, but the mischief was done. Negroes were no longer the mental inferiors of whites. However, this did not necessarily mean that I now thought them my equals, but simply that some Negroes were as intelligent as some whites. Of course, that did not include myself. I had a very exalted opinion of my superiority, and my inferiors consisted of practically the whole human race, white, black, brown, red and yellow. An idea bred by the social position I had occupied in the Cotton and Cattle Belt, where there is little or no middle class, socially speaking, anyway, and where to one of my class a poor white (everyone but a handful at the top) is almost as lowly as a Negro.

So I had much more to learn. This was 1920 when California was flaming with "Red" activities. Restless, morbid and curious like most of my generation, I went to look on at the Reds and soon I, too, caught fire. I became enthusiastic about equality in all forms. I conceived the notion, and it may be true, that my dissatisfaction with life, and that of all wealthy people I knew, was due to our economic system which put a premium on profit and justified anything that was successful and despised or condemned anything that was not. I decided that if this system did not make even the successful happy it must be pretty bad and in need of renovation. I began to lose my feeling of exalted aloofness and to think of myself as just another human being caught in the toils of a system that destroyed rich and poor alike. But since I had seemingly profited in many ways by oppression (I was not undernourished or overworked, though I probably was overnourished and underworked), it was up to me to make redress. I marched in Red parades, sang the "Internationale," gave away my allowance to "defense" funds and, of course, read the *Liberator*. And in the *Liberator* one month I saw the *Crisis* advertised. (I had not known before that there was a Negro Press.) Full of curiosity about the magazine, I subscribed for it. I was agreeably surprised to note that it was in good English. This was at the height of the post-war lynching epidemic, and these gruesome activities were all duly and realistically recounted in the *Crisis*. Many of them occurred in my home state, in communities which I knew well, and my reaction upon reading about them was one of shame and guilt. The worst that the *Crisis* could say about Southern mobs I knew from personal experience to be true. More-

over, I recalled when I had sympathized with this savage sport of "nigger hunting." And this barbarism was no new thing sprung from war hysteria. I and my race and my clan had for three centuries been engaged in oppressing and scourging the darker folk. This thought so disturbed me that almost every night for months I had a nightmare about it. These took the form of symbolism—white chickens pecking black ones to death; large dogs devouring small ones; buffaloes torn and stamped by cattle, and in each case I felt all of the horror and dread of the victim. I suppose this was some kind of inner chastisement.

Then, one night, I had a very different sort of dream. In this one Linky introduced me to a strange Negro youth and we began to dance together. I felt an indescribable happiness and something seemed to say to me that now that we were dancing together there would be no more suffering and misunderstanding in the world. The dream must have been a form of psychical climax, for thereafter I had no more nightmares. As I kept a diary, it was easy for me to perceive the course my dreams had taken. However, I continued to dream about the Negro. Dreams which were no doubt wish fulfillments.

I became a Negrophile. I bought all the books I could find about and by Negroes. I wept over Negro spirituals and collected Negro poetry. I learned the Charleston and talked passionately of "Negro Art." I wrote my father that he must prepare to hand over his possessions to his workers, black and white, and cease corrupting them with economic pressure. I deluged my friends in the South with pamphlets by Lenin and poems by the "New" Negro. I even contributed some poems of my own on the subject to the *Messenger* (which I now found more to my liking than the *Crisis* since it was "Redder") and began a novel in which the hero was a Negro boy and the villain was the Ku Klux Klan.

This quick shift of attitude may sound incredible to some, but it is my opinion that race prejudice among upper class Southerners who have associated with Negroes from birth, is only skin deep (I do not refer to pigment), and that is why they are so vociferous in their denunciation of minor forms of social equality. The Negro offers them too powerful a temptation for them to take any chances. In all human beings there is an inner urge, I think, to be just, and the Southerner by suppressing this has created a complex in himself which exaggerates all of his emotions in regard to the Negro and, in consequence, a swift metamorphosis from Negrophobe to Negrophile is possible. It is noteworthy that some of the Negro's staunchest friends today are Southerners. Labor rivalry which the poor white feels offers an obstruction of which the wealthy white is free.

But during all this time I had never met an intellectual Negro. I came to New York and for the first time met one. X was a writer, one of the "New" Negroes. Only X denied there was such a thing as the New Negro, contending that the World War had merely upset American traditions and given the younger colored generation a chance to assert a few ideas—ideas which he said had been voiced just as well back in Frederick Douglass' generation.

X was a Northern Negro with a Yankee temperament. And I had not known how Southern I was till I met him, for I talked more like a

"nigger" and had more niggerisms so-called than he had. Yet he was a full-blooded Negro and almost as dark as they come. He had never sung a Spiritual and did not greatly admire them. He had not heard a Blues song till he was in his teens and he disliked procrastination, emotionalism and loud talking—qualities for which he said I, along with all other Southerners, black and white, had a weakness. Neither did he believe there was such a thing as "Negro Art." Any difference in the artistic production of the Aframerican was due, he declared, to the Negro's economic status here and not to his racial strain. The Blues and Spirituals resembled the music of oppressed groups the world over. This disappointed me, for I wanted to feel that the Negro was essentially "different." And neither did X believe that the Southern Negro was ready for Communism. So we quarreled upon all these points and became fast friends.

I was living in the Village, and once or twice a week he would come down to see me and as often I would run up to Harlem to go with him to the theaters, cabarets and dance halls of the Black Belt. My sentimental views of the Negro greatly amused him, and he undertook to emancipate me from my first emancipation. Everything about Harlem thrilled me, but I concealed my enthusiasms, for he seemed politely bored by what seemed to me astonishing and novel. The octoroon choruses at the Lafayette, the black sheiks at Small's, the expert amateur dancing to be seen at the Savoy, the Curb Market along the 8th Avenue "L," with its strange West Indian roots and flare of tropical fruits which bloomed even when snow had whitened the face of Harlem, the displays of chitterlings and pig-snouts in the restaurant windows; Stivers Row, where the colored aristocracy lived in stately houses behind stately trees, and three blocks away the dirty tenements of 142nd Street with their shrieking swarms of black, brown, yellow and pale ivory children; and the foreign Negros speaking French, Spanish, and Dutch and, strangely enough, looking their nationalities; the British West Indians with the Africanized Cockney and thoroughly British temperament; the rural Southern Negroes so entirely different from the urban Southern Negro and yet more like him than like their Northern rural cousins. I was finding that "All Coons Look Alike" only to the inexperienced eye.

One night over a midnight supper at Tabb's X casually remarked that he would like to marry me. I had never considered such a thing and was secretly shocked by his presumption (although I had been dallying with the idea of an "affair" with him). Not that X was asking me to marry him, it was simply a casual aside; but the idea that such a thing was possible for the first time occurred to me. And though he did not refer to it again, it stuck in my mind. I had day dreams about it and wrote myself long lectures in my diary upon how inadvisable such a step would be. The glance and touch of X thrilled me as no other man's ever had. I had no objection to being embraced by him. I believe that Southerners who are used to Negroid characteristics of hair and skin have far less aversion to a colored person as a mate than a Northerner. (Note our overwhelming mulatto population in the South.) I felt that what was good enough for my forefathers was good enough for me. But marriage was a very different matter. Obviously, my emancipation had not ended.

Then, very unexpectedly, my older sister arrived in New York. My father had sent her to rescue me from the Arty atmosphere of the Village. We went to live on Park Avenue, where I was supposed to meet the "Best" People and forget my radical friends. I found the "Best" People merely better dressed and less intelligent; both groups were equally promiscuous and inebrious. When a "wild" party grew too intolerably dull I slipped out and taxied uptown to spend a quiet evening with X in some Harlem dance hall. And the contrast between X and the men I had just left was all in X's favor. The flabby bankers and brokers and the callow sons of the rich both seemed immature beside him. They were like old little boys playing at life. And the atmosphere of their parties seemed cheap beside the sincerity of a Harlem dance hall.

My sister was violently anti-Negro. On several occasions she shamed me by flaunting her prejudice in public. Like most Southerners, she had a complex on the subject and the least thing stirred it up and started it to churning out Southernisms. Behind such violent outbursts there seems to be a desire to loudly reiterate that the Negro *is* inferior and that Southerners are justified in their oppression of him. Once she broke up a dinner party because one of the guests, a very blond and Nordic movie star, expressed a regret that "owing to American prejudice she could not do a picture opposite a certain Negro actor" who, she said, was the handsomest man she had ever seen. Once, in Saks' Fifth Avenue shop, when the clerk waited on a well-dressed colored woman before she did on us. Again, when one of our friends, a dilettante artist, modeled a Negro girl. These antics brought home to me afresh the injustice and barbarity of Southern ethics. For even worse than what they do to the Negro is the effect they have upon the whites who mouth them. They create in the white a bloated egotism which is both dangerous and disgusting and which has no place in this age. During these spells of superiority my sister was converted into an ugly, loud-mouthed shrew. Each time she went into one I was tempted to tell her I was in love with a Negro and watch her explode into restful eternity. She offered me a fearful example of what I might become. Her egotism kept her upset and miserable. She got no joy out of life because she could never stop thinking of herself and how wonderful she was. I had enough characteristics in common with her to fear for my own soul if I continued in the same atmosphere. I decided that I must learn to be humble or I was lost. This may sound childish, but I had seen all my family corroded by egotism into miserable and arrogant fools. I decided to marry X if he would have me and become a member of a race which was daily forced to be humble. No doubt, I wanted to marry X anyway, and this was such another good reason for doing so. Not that I wasn't perfectly sincere in my search for humility, but usually it takes more than one motive to move one to act.

One night, sitting in the Savoy between dances, I asked X to ask me to marry him. He gave me a sharp look and said: "Are you sure you want me to?" I nodded, and he leaned over and very earnestly proposed. I accepted and the date was set for New Year's Eve, three weeks away.

In the meantime my sister's husband had arrived from the South to take us back for the holidays. Compared to his opinion of the Negro my

sister's prejudice was mild and tolerant. A newspaper mention of a black and tan marriage greatly upset him the night of his arrival.

"Why, niggers can't marry white people!" he announced from the sitting room where he was reading. "Why, it's against the law!"

"Aren't there some states which permit intermarriage?" I asked casually from the bedroom.

"Certainly not!" he answered. "Maybe Mexico does, but no *civilized* countries permit such unnatural unions!"

"Doesn't the paper say they were married here?" I asked innocently.

"Yes, but the paper's wrong!" thundered my brother-in-law.

He didn't get over his anger all evening, and next afternoon, as soon as he got in from the Stock Exchange, he announced that he was right, niggers couldn't marry white people in America; he had asked the cotton brokers at the Exchange and they had said they couldn't!

En route from New York to St. Louis when we started into the diner for dinner he perceived a colored man eating at one of the tables. He almost had a stroke.

"These ladies can't eat in here!" he belligerently announced to the whole dining car and rushed us back to our drawing room where he had us served by a Negro.

On the day after Christmas I told my father that I was returning to New York alone. That I had a position offered me there and wished to henceforth dispense with my allowance and leisure. I left next day amid protests and arrived in New York New Year's Eve morning.

I was frightened as I stood up beside X in a small room in the Municipal Building and heard the hard-boiled Irish judge pronounce us man and wife. I was frightened for months afterwards. I don't know why, except that all animals are nervous in the face of the new and unknown. My fright did not interfere with the pleasure I had in my new surroundings or with my love for my husband. Perhaps it was excitement rather than fright, because I lost all interest in vicarious forms of excitement, such as reading and going to the theater, while it lasted. I was so thrilled by living that I needed no other stimulant.

I have now been secretly married for over two years. My fright is all gone and the novelty of my surroundings and my position has somewhat worn off. But Harlem is still to me the most interesting part of New York because it is keyed to a higher pitch of living and because the people, having suffered more, are for the most part saner than those one finds in the white sections. A sanity which manifests itself in a greater frankness toward the facts of life, a keener enjoyment of the senses and a lack of self-pity that is gallant and admirable. And though Harlemites have a way of strolling up Seventh Avenue as if they hadn't a thing in the world to do, that is merely because they take pride in this kind of promenading, for they are really the busiest people I ever met. Both sexes work hard. One person frequently holds down several jobs. A woman may be a kitchen maid in the day time and that evening look like a million dollars in one of the night clubs or dance halls as hostess. They are jacks of many trades. A man may be a porter part of the year and the rest of the time a song and dance artist; he may be a waiter and a gradu-

ate of Harvard, writing sociological tracts on the side. The popular idea of Harlem as a Nigger Heaven, half-garish, half-primitive, where everybody drinks gin, does the Black-bottom and cuts up a "high yallah" on Saturday night, is a Harlem which so far I have been unable to discover. The excessive rents, the tax levied everywhere on the possessors of dark skins, discrimination in the labor market and their very American desire to keep up a "front," forces them into a hectic pace. They work hard and in reaction play hard. But not quite as white Americans do. They do not exaggerate their efforts either in work or play, but act something like soldiers who have been for a long time on the firing line and have achieved a greater steadiness of nerve.

The black American seems everywhere more cynical than the whites of the same locality. And though the Harlemite gets more "breaks" than the Southern Negro, he is also more conscious of the forces that thwart him. In consequence, he has little of the self-confidence and rosy optimism so necessary for success in this age. He undermines the fruits of his energy by underrating himself, but he is more interesting and civilized because of it. And it may be that this lack of false hope gives him more strength to bear reality and leaves him more room for a greater enjoyment of life. A Negro theater audience is noticeably more keen in its appreciation of amusement. It is quick to recognize any sexual reference and heartier in its approval of it than a white audience would be. I have never heard white Americans speak of love in the terms of an Art, but I have often heard Aframericans do so. And they have coined expressions upon the technique of love not to be duplicated in white parlance. That the Negro is a better lover than the Caucasian is not without reason, for with the exception of the taboo upon the white woman he has enjoyed more sexual freedom here than other groups. Add to this the facts that a more rapid destruction of the unfit and a more strenuous sexual selection have been going on in the Negro group since his arrival here three hundred years ago (every black person taken out of Africa was subjected to a thorough physical examination), and there is a sound basis for his reputed virility. Movie scenes of unrequited and suffering love which whites take solemnly invariably throws a Negro audience into gales of laughter. This is also due to greater experience in love, I think; added to the fact that he has suffered such great blows that it seems silly to be bowled over by little things.

To my great surprise, I found Harlem full of race prejudice; never as crudely manifested as in Dixie, but there nevertheless. Our marriage caused nearly as much displeasure in Harlem as it would have in Texas. Colored women especially resented it. They have done all of the racial intermixing up to recently and they greatly fear the rising competition of white women. But even the Negro men thought that a man as prominent as X should have been wiser in his selection of a legal mate. One Negro paper, in mentioning the rumor of our marriage, didn't see why X, "if he wanted a wife with a white skin," hadn't picked one of the many blondes of remote Negro ancestry to be found in Harlem. Even the "Intellectuals" thought we should have had an affair and let it go at that. To marry a white woman was bad enough, but to

marry a Southern white woman was terrible. They seemed to think that I must be either a charlatan or a fool to willingly assume the burdens of prejudice under which they were born. No one took into consideration the fact that X and I might be in love with each other.

I suppose that our marriage will eventually be discovered and aired in the white press. When it happens, I will doubtless be disinherited and certainly unable ever to return to Texas, where racial intermarriage is a crime punishable by five years' imprisonment. This does not worry me. I have had enough of Texas and my husband is able to support me as well as it is good for anyone to live. However, I dread hurting the people who love me. My family is incapable of ever understanding my marriage as anything but insane and disgraceful. My mother will be spared the ordeal, for she recently died; but my sister will never forgive me. And my father, who has had a mulatto mistress for forty years, will feel that I, who am his youngest and his favorite, have foully betrayed him. My brother, who has a colored daughter by a black woman and is thought none the less of for it, will never speak to me again when he hears that I, too, am now in a position to dilute the black race. But I would not take anything for the experience of these two years. They have disciplined me as nothing else could. I am a stronger human being on account of them. Knowing my husband, who has from the cradle overcome the greatest difficulties without losing his sense of humor or impersonal point of view, has offered me a splendid example of courage and endurance, has been a lesson to me in the highest kind of ethics. I have been South several times in these two years, but the trips only cemented my desire to cast my lot henceforth with the Negro. I would not for worlds return to the arrogant and useless manner of life to which I was born. For I have gained the peace of humility and a purpose in life. My purpose? To break down race prejudice that my children may not suffer as have my husband and my friends in Harlem and the dark folk of Dixie, and that families like the one in which I was born may cease to exist, and that America may eventually become the free and democratic country of which she now only vainly and hypocritically boasts.

A DECADE OF WORLD CINEMA

BY HERMAN G. WEINBERG

BOTH France and America dispute the right to claim for themselves "the cradle of the cinema"—yet it is neither of these which has created and developed this new means of expression, nor is it Germany with her advanced knowledge of chemistry and lighting, nor the intellect of the Swedish. It remained for a people considered "out of the running" at a time when these countries were turning out their *Caligaris, Gosta Boerlings, Miracle des Loups* and *Birth of a Nations.* It remained, curiously enough, for Russia—not the Holy Russia of the Romanoffs, but the New Russia of the Soviets, A.D. 1917.

From out of the West had come this invention, "that ingenious toy," the motion-picture camera—and Russia, heavy with the burden of many centuries of oppression, steeped in an Oriental lethargy and religious mysticism, was slow in grasping the secret of *kinetic power* which lay in the film. The basis of the film was speed—light-motion—and the West had been attuned to speed. The East had been slow and easy-going—the camel against the train. The relation between time and space was different.

After the October Revolution, Russia emerged from an age-old intellectual stupor of ignorance and squalor. The peasant had been taught to read and write and to think for himself. Social and moral codes had changed. The revolution had brought with it a new, turbulent and cleansing force. What customs, superstitions and prejudices remained had been charged with the breath of a new era calling it to a new life.

Heedless of heretofore accepted canons, formulas and credos, which had made of the Western Cinema a disconcerting mixture of a sophistication in its last stages of decay and the sheerest sort of militaristic-politico-social propaganda, the Russians went back to the soil and filmed Gogol's *Taras Bulba,* Pushkin's *Stationmaster,* Tolstoy's *Polykuska,* among others of a similar nature. Each little picture with a social problem of its own—showing how unhappy was the lot of the serf under the old régime—and opening the eyes of the peasant for the first time. These were the seeds of what was to come as a natural growth.

The technique in these films was not new. The West had introduced it and had carried it further, *elaborating* on the same material, instead of endeavoring to create a *new* film-language, and not only that, but a more perfect and pure expression of the film-language. And it was here that the Revolutionary theatres of Meierhold, Tairov, Andreyev, Toller, Piscator and the rest of them—the cubists, post-cubists, constructivists, which were little more than the backwash of the artificialities swept from the Western theatre, *vide, expressionism* in Germany, *dadaism* and *sur-realism*

in France, *vorticism* in England, *futurism* in Italy, resulted in an offshoot—a group of young *regisseurs* who found themselves hampered by the theatre and its limitations, in which they had reduced everything on the stage and in the manuscript to its bare essence and construction and had found—nothing. A vicious circle had been completed. With the invention and introduction of the camera in which the horizon was unlimited and time and space were at the will of the cameraman, a means to a "will to power" had been discovered by them and they deserted the stage for the film.

Sergei Michaelovitch Eisenstein was one such. The Eggert of *Aelita* was another. There was Pudovkin, Taritch, Room, Protosanow, Alexandrowsky, Preobrezhenskaya, Stabavoj, Kutsnesoff, Trauberg, and even Meierhold himself. And these discovered a dynamism in the film which none knew existed before.

Strike, Mother, Potemkin, The Black Sunday, Ten Days, The End of St. Petersburg, The Village of Sin, Two Days, Ivan the Terrible, were film documents which carried a message to the peasant, and, if they would see it, to the peasant of the West. They were labeled propaganda films by the West. Yet wherein did they differ from the propaganda films of the West?

Only in so far as to the class which was being glorified. The message dished out to peasant and bourgeoisie of the West was slightly different from the one the *kulak* and *moujik* got in Russia. Western films, like *West Point,* glorifying a military academy; *The Patent Leather Kid,* which justified being killed and maimed in the service of one's government and the honor of the flag; *The Big Parade,* which showed the war as something of a lark (though it was the least offensive of the lot in America); *Behind the Front,* a farcical treatment of the war which must have made the ghosts of the corpses lying in the cemeteries of France shrivel in the thought that they *did* die in vain; *Wings,* an incredibly juvenile concoction reminiscent of the Rover Boys and Frank Merriwell species of fiction, which glorified fighting in the air for God and Country and the Right; *Lilac Time,* the *reductio ad absurdum* of *Wings; The Flying Fleet,* more sugarcoating of the aeroplane and military academies, and innumerable others. Or, what was worse, the flood of films manufactured in America during those benighted days of the Great Liberty Loan Drive in 1917—*The Beast of Berlin, Yankee Doodle in Berlin, To Hell With Potsdam,* etc. Films manufactured with the sole intent of instilling into the minds of the American people what ruthless barbarians the Germans were and why they should give their last mite to purchase powder and cannon to wipe off every German from the face of the earth. Or the popularizing, via the film, of a non-existent Teutonic "hymn of hate." Or the incredible films of the early Edison Company, like *The Unbeliever,* showing an impossible "Hun" officer shooting women and children in Belgium, *ad nauseam* . . .

Germany, with *Metropolis,* later tried to rehabilitate good will among nations. Ufa (the Universum Film Atkeingesellschaft of Neu Babelsberg), their chief production unit, began a strictly pacifistic film, *Am Rand der Welt,* but Heugenberg, anti-socialist and financial controller of a score of Nationalist newspapers and of the destinies of that company,

stepped in and muddled the works. England, with *Mons* and *The Somme*, tried weakly too in this direction. Also with a sea film—*The Coronel and the Falklands*. Germany, with a brave little film, *The Raider Emden*, produced with the coöperation of the British Admiralty, and France, with *Le Grand Epreuve, Verdun, Pour La Paix du Monde*, went further in the field of anti-war propaganda. And then Vsevelod Pudovkin in Russia settled once and for all the problem of war in *The End of St. Petersburg* by showing war robbed of its last vestige of glamour. It was war as Andreyev pictured it in *The Red Laugh* and as it was to Andreas Latzko in *Men in War*. Who will ever forget that scene of the rose-garlanded cannon rising slowly to position? And as this is being written, in the summer of 1930, there has been nothing in all literature and the graphic arts to show the awful desolation and ghastliness of war so penetratingly as the war scenes in Pudovkin's great film—notably one scene which shows a group of soldiers rolling in their death agony in the mud-colored dust down the side of a hill until the scene is blotted out by the choking dust and poisonous vapors in the air and then, having cleared, discloses stiff corpses lying strangled and discolored on the earth . . .

It was necessary to create a new film language. The war had upset everything, including the entire old order. The staid, complacent, negative demeanor of before had to give way to a new and cleansing one. And as a matter of record, as historical documents made so that the world should not too quickly forget, Pudovkin and Eisenstein, those two proteans of the world cinema, made those films which the West turned around and called insidious and unashamed Soviet propaganda. The West had forgotten all too soon.

For one thing, Russia startled the rest of the movie world with a decidedly iconoclastic and revolutionary film technique. Short scenes, as quickly transient as life itself. Nebulous in themselves but eloquent in the grotesque juxtaposition with which they were placed with symbols of the old and new orders as their physical context. Piercing, trenchant, meaningful innuendo. Warmth and humanness, and affirmative where the West was negative or non-committal.

Of course, these films were propaganda for something. You've got to have something to say even before you attempt to make a film. There may not be any truths—but there are certainly some half-truths and, in all fairness, we must grant Pudovkin and Eisenstein that. They were immeasurably more justified in making *Mother* and *Potemkin* than the Edison Company was in producing *The Unbeliever* or Universal was in making *The Beast of Berlin*. It all resolves itself down to a question of whose propaganda was justified or had a measure of truth to support it.

The "short-shot" technique of the new film language developed by the Russians is like "hammer-blows" which would awaken the people from their lethargy of innocuous complacency. This is their secret. That is the difference between the "long-shot" technique of most Western films which gloat and dawdle over scenes because they don't know what to do with the material or how to divide it up into biting psychological thrusts at stupidity and inanity. Or making fragments speak for a whole. Or waking to a conscious irony. Or in short realizing that this is not the best of all possible worlds.

The West has its heritage in the works of Swift, Defoe, Voltaire, Anatole France and others. If the mass of the world's people would undertake to read *Candide* and let it sink in, it is very probable that much of the world's woes would cease. There is nothing quite so destructive to established institutions and customs as the laughter of ridicule. And that is just what the Russian film makers have succeeded in doing. They have caused a frequent succession of knowing smiles to break out on the face of the intelligent spectator witnessing their films.

. . . . . .

The films from Germany have almost consistently been steeped in the psychoanalytical school of photoplay technique. Pabst, Dupont, Murnau, Grune, Lang, May, Pommer and the rest of them employed a film language made up in the main of symbols, often obvious and easily recognized (basing and justifying this use of symbolism, no doubt, on the timelessness, the universal acceptance and knowledge of these symbols) and which fitted into the general scheme by several virtues. Often, these symbols took the form of still-life, mechanical objects, swinging doors, elevators, mirrors, motor cars, uniforms, electric signs—all that were part and parcel of our much-vaunted twentieth century civilization. These things were often excellent photographic material, for the trenchant camera lens caught the sheen of their surfaces and imparted to them a special and meaningful significance.

But this, it must be understood, was merely the application to a new medium of a form of expression that had served its purpose in the advance-guard literature, in poetry of the moderns and all the post-war literati on the surging wave of expressionism which swept over Germany after the war, as if to reduce everything to a didactic principle, to break with artificiality, and sentimentality (sentiment, they had, for these things, but not sentimentality), to be free—the triumph of order and clarity. (Mondrian, of Holland, for instance, had sought to achieve this in painting).

But the Germans never got stronger than *Variety* and the sail-cloth over the sailors in *Potemkin* is worth all of *Variety,* excellent though that film was. *The Last Laugh,* that finest flower of the Teutonic cinema-craft, heralded the birth of the film-poem. The unwieldy architectural films of Lang (*Metropolis,* the *Nibelungen, Spies,* etc.) were static things with more of an eye to visual composition than to pure cinema dynamics and warmth of humanness. Pabst in *Jeanne Ney, La Rue Sans Joie* and *Pandora's Box,* went back to Freud for his dissecting of the human animal in a series of intensely interesting and provocative pictures. He is, to me, the most promising figure of the German cinema today.

Sweden, of those Swedish films I have seen, was to me a disconcerting mixture of intellect and mysticism, and either these things are not good cinema-material or the cinema is not yet ready to assimilate them, but with one thing and another nothing virile, nothing charged with that "life blood" which makes of even the lowliest of the Russian films, of *Polykushka,* for instance, a breathing thing, has emanated from the film studios of Scandinavia. Yet Sweden, in Mauritz Stiller, gave the world an unusually brilliant director, whose late lamented death is mourned by all lovers of the artistic cinema.

The French discovered at an early date the secret of dynamism, of

kinetic power, of psychical photographic innuendo which was at the same time cinematographic. But it was, in many cases, a literary innuendo which fostered the cinematographic, and the French film art was an offshoot of French painting and literature and, in a less noble way, of the French stage. It was not a thing conceived in terms of light and shadow and the shunting of these two in restless, fluid, mobile movements which is cinema. The abstract films of *Man Ray, Henri Chomette,* Andre Sauvage, Rene Clair, de Beaumont, Sevier, Kuhn, etc., are an exception, of course; but even in many of their works we felt the influence of Picasso, Leger, and Braque, though Rene Clair is probably the most original talent in France. A young Brazilian, Alberto Cavalcanti, has done some splendid work in *En Rade, Rien Que Les Heures, L'Petite Lilie.* Jacques Feyder enriched the literature of the French cinema with his *Visages des Infants* and *Therese Raquin.* Dreyer, the director of the unforgettable *Jeanne d'Arc,* is a Dane and did as much as any single person to raise the status of film to a point of aristocratic respectability.

America, after deluging the world with its swill, has come out with one or two respectable photoplays which survived the advent of that monstrous anomaly, the talking picture, in *All Quiet on the Western Front* and *Hallelujah.* These can be added to such landmarks of the history of the American movie as the early Griffith films, Chaplin's *A Woman of Paris,* and one or two things each by Vidor, Lubitsch and von Stroheim. The former, from Erich Maria Remarque's vivid book, is brave and uncompromising. Progress has been made since those early and dark days from 1917 to 1920.

But the Russians have not remembered their paintings and their literature to adapt their forms to the screen. True, in rare instances, as in Preobrezhenskaya's *Village of Sin,* certain compositions of peasant women in the fields recall Bilibin's paintings come to life, but these are incidental and unstudied. *Ten Days, Potemkin, St. Petersburg,* and *Storm Over Asia* were all conceived and told in terms of the camera. They are primarily visceral and dynamic, depending for their effect on the weird, shunting play of light and shadow, on lines, planes and surfaces crossing the screen, on the interplay of mass and line, like a gigantic geometrical problem, unswerving in its course towards the inevitable goal, as full of fate and foreboding as life itself.

It is the first definite film language and yet it is but one form that the film language can take. The other is that suggested by the method employed by Murnau, Freund and Mayer in *The Last Laugh.* Whether the outcome will be the film poem or the film document, time alone can answer. The technique of the talking pictures can prove to be of an expansive rather than of a compromising nature. Eisenstein has even gone so far as to draw up a manifesto of the sound picture in which he would use *sound* (not necessarily talking, or music, or sound effects, but conglomeration of all three) polyphonically. It is his intention to fuse sound and light contrapuntally as in music. Just as the fugue and counterpoint are the structural skeletons upon which all music is based, so may the use of sound and light, employed in the sound-films of the future, lay the basis for a new and fundamental cinema technique—*optophonetics.*

THE THEATRE

A SURVEY of the plays that ran on Broadway last year leaves one with a sickening sense of decay. Aside from the experimental technique exploited by Philip Barry in *Hotel Universe* (Guild Production), and the futile excursions into the exquisite by Mei Lan Fang, no originality was there, no newness. *Karl and Anna* (Guild Production) was perhaps the only other play that essayed a somewhat unusual approach, but the effort was so obviously a failure that whatever importance it might have had was lost. The plays that were most popular—*Street Scene* (William A. Brady), *Berkeley Square* (Gilbert Miller and Leslie Howard Production), *Little Accident* (Lee Schubert)—had nothing in them to excite interest or admiration. *Street Scene* and *Berkeley Square* were good theatre, the one in the realisitc genre, the other in the fantastic. In no sense, however, did these plays succeed in significance—as O'Neill's did some years ago, or even those of the early Sydney Howard. *Street Scene* was competent, well worked-up melodrama, a sort of drab social photograph, unmarked by imaginative insight or interpretation. *Berkeley Square* was Barrie popularized into Durant. That which was pure fantasy, the Barriesque elements, succeeded; that which was Barrie verging philosophic, the Durantesque elements, failed. For those anxious to retreat from the contemporary world with its terrifying realities and truths, the muddled mysticism of *Berkeley Square* afforded that intimacy with the cosmic which so many critics eternally seek. For those anxious for a theatre that does more than act as a shock-absorber for man's pertubations and fears, the *Berkeley Square* philosophy is sick stuff. That does not mean that Leslie Howard did not act the part of protagonist to a point of astonishing excellence, or that the play lacked neatness of construction or cleverness of climax. But what it does mean is that despite these various excellences, the drama was of no moment. It satisfied certain middle-class attitudes of mind, the individual's ability to escape the desperation of the present by a retreat into the past, the social concept of time overridden by the mastery of the individual will—but it neither challenged such attitudes nor went beyond them. In other words, for all its metaphysical allusions to time, its mixed Shavianism and Bergsonism, it was as old-fashioned as Turgenev's *Month in the Country* (Guild Production) or Tolstoy's *Living Corpse* (Eva Le Gallienne). Even less, however, can be said for such plays as *Rebound* (Arthur Hopkins), *It's a Grand Life* (A. L. Erlanger and George C. Tyler), *Meteor* (Guild), and *Journey's End* (Gilbert Miller). *Journey's End*, by the way, like all the war plays that have been successful, did not have one element

of positive emphasis about it. In fact, the same negativism only in a different form was to be seen in the *Criminal Code* (William Harris, Jr.) which was much superior to most of the plays of the season.

The more one thinks of the emptiness of last year's plays, the more one can see how rapidly the modern theatre is going the way of all middle-class institutions. With the breakdown of middle-class defenses in every other field—economic, political, moral, educational—the decay of the modern theatre can be seen as but part of a general trend. The talkie which is taking its place is the theatre of the fourth-estate. Like jazz, it serves first the needs of the masses, and only incidentally, in its subtler forms—cinematographic caviare, as it were—appeals to the "culture" of the middle-class. The talkie, controlled still by middle-class individuals, represents no revolt, however, against middle-class ideals, because the masses here have been saturated with middle-class ideology. It is the more advanced elements of the middle-class, those elements which in the main constitute the theatre-going public, that have come to scorn the sight of its old virtues. In fact, this aspect of the middle-class, with the general collapse of bourgeois controls, has come to laugh at itself—Mr. George Bernhard Shaw helped them a great deal to laugh more gracefully this way—and demand a form of sophistication that the nineteenth century theatre did not provide. Consequently, we find a large proportion of this group bemoaning the decay of the theatre because of this loss of sophistication rather than because of the loss of any deep purpose which the theatre was able to serve. This group, which is supposed to represent the highest culture of the middle-class, has been hardest hit by this invasion of the fourth-estate into various arts. The success of jazz in particular and its growing adoption, even in middle-class music circles and among modern conductors, has been an even more desperate evil.

It is too seldom realized that the modern theatre was never made for the proletariat. Its prices on the whole have been and still are prohibitive and its materials in large part were really of such a character as not to appeal to the worker. It was made for the middle-class, and the upper elements of the middle-class at that, and its decay now indicates as well as anything else in the contemporary scene the disintegration of that middle-class and its inability to defeat the inevitable drive of mass production, which has affected the arts as definitely as it has affected the industries. So long as the ideology of the masses remains middle-class, development in the talkie cannot advance. It is only when that ideology can be made genuinely proletarian as in Soviet Russia or Germany today —and as attested by the work of Eisenstein, Pudowkin, and others—that a new release of energy as a result of this new class emphasis is possible in the art of the film.

CURRENT PLAYS

Lysistrata (Philadelphia Theatre Ass.)—A most amazing and amusing transcription of this great comedy. To be sure, despite its bawdiness of words as well as gesture, it is still very much restrained in terms of its original. It does not even have a Beardsley to give it a twentieth century emphasis in terms of its native phallicism. If the actors are unsuccessful, the same fortunately can-

not be said of the actresses. Violet Kemble Cooper was excellent as Lysistrata, and Miriam Hopkins as Callinika and Hortense Alden as Myrrhina were equally effective in their more interesting if less dominating parts.

Green Pastures (Lawrence Rivers Production) — A highly overrated piece of pageantry which has managed to pass as a drama. Unfortunately, this play has no more racial authenticity than Japanese jazz. It is an unimaginative concoction that is all the more vicious because it pretends to represent a form of reality which does not exist at all. The only redeeming elements in this otherwise horrible travesty of the Negro are the spirituals and the stage sets.

The Last Mile (Herman Shumlin) —A superb first act, followed by two acts of melodrama. James Bell, the boy condemned to death, does an extremely fine piece of acting. Despite the melodramatic crescendo, the sincerity of the play as a whole makes it carry more than ordinary conviction. One of the best directed productions (directed by Chester Erskin) on the stage during the past year.

"*One, Two, Three*" and "*Violet*" (Gilbert Miller)—Molnar at his worst. Pleasant enough piffle, amusing if one has no better way to spend his time—an excellent illustration of what the theatre has come to.

Farewell to Arms (A. H. Woods) —A terribly uneven, disjointed, and ineffective adaptation of Hemingway's novel. The characters spring at you with an unnatural velocity at the very beginning; the ways in which they are forced to reveal themselves are most artificial. Two scenes in the play are notable—the one where the hero is wounded and carried off to the hospital, and the secnod, where the man and girl part. This latter scene is superbly acted.

Garrick Gaities (Guild)—Amusing, light, informality of the stage, clever in spots and seldom altogether bad.

V. F. C.

BOOK REVIEWS

Portrait of the Artist as American. By *Mathew Josephson. Harcourt, Brace.* $3.00.

In the introduction to his *Portrait of the Artist as American,* Mr. Matthew Josephson should have stated his purpose in writing the book. This may be an irrelevant, perhaps even an impertinent, question in the eyes of the author, who would probably insist that the business of the critic is exclusively with the work as an accomplished fact. And yet such a statement would be valuable to the critic, for without it he simply cannot decide how to approach Mr. Josephson's strange essay.

Was it the author's intention to write a literary history of the generation which lived between 1865 and 1900? Obviously not, for his omissions are enormous, his organization is without any historical basis or function, and his fund of information about the problems he does touch upon is pathetically inadequate.

Was he interested merely in interpreting the character, the artistic nature, of that generation? This seems to be the reasonable answer—until we come to the final chapter and there come upon an amazing paragraph:

> "We must invoke the forbearance and the pardon of the reader for having painted in such decidedly melancholy tints the exotic, aborted, or estranged careers of American artists. Truly the men of the late nineteenth century were, for the most part, troubled souls; much evil befell them. And therefore we are in danger of pitying them."

If this paragraph means anything, it means that Mr. Josephson is wondering if his interpretations have not been subjective, if he has not been dishonest in placing emphasis, if the tone of the previous two hundred and eighty-odd pages was not false and the atmosphere unreal. If this is really his suspicion, he is not only right but is also denying an interpretive purpose.

We are forced to the conclusion, then, that what he was after was an expression of his own feelings about certain aspects of American life. His book, in fine, is another one of those pseudo-biographies or pseudo-histories, valueless as biography or history, but interesting as autobiography, of which Mr. Lewis Mumford's *Herman Melville* is a recent example.

This, at any rate, is the only sensible approach to the book, although we cannot be sure that we are entirely just to the author, for nowhere does he frankly stand up on his own feet and say:

> "Here are my beliefs, my prejudices, call them what you will—they are *mine*—here's the way I feel about the whole damned business."

Ah, no, he is never as frank as that, nor does he ever express himself so precisely or so clearly. Only the last two pages give him away, and then only to those who know something about his past work.

The book is a study of that curious generation of American artists which flourished in the second half of the nineteenth century. Henry James and Henry Adams were its principal spokesmen, but it included such figures as Emily Dickinson, Bierce, Hearn, Crane, Whistler, Howells and Mark Twain, and Mr. Josephson also finds room among his breathless pages

for those who lived on from a previous era: Emerson, Whitman, Melville, and others.

It is a melancholy study in defeat—a rhapsody in mauve—for it is the author's observation that this was a generation of "baffled lives . . . ill adjusted and isolated," whose revolt "took the form of flight: inwardly, a withdrawal into themselves; or outwardly, a physical expatriation." It was a generation of artists who were, from the point of view of the author, unfortunately born in an age of emerging industrialism, an age which did not understand or appreciate them, which bullied or ignored them, which did not feed them the spiritual food necessary for their very sensitive, very delicate souls. Mr. Josephson suspects that this was not merely the tragedy of one generation of artists, but was, indeed, a prophecy, in the sense that the forces operating then obtain today. We are faced, Mr. Josephson declares, with "the dilemma of the artist in the modern world." Can he survive as an artist in a machine-age, in a mass-age, in America, which is the land of the machine and the home of the mass?

An examination of the facts upon which he builds his dreadful structure of gloom reveals a very curious situation. His facts are seldom wrong; it is what he does with them and what he leaves out that arouses our suspicion. In his half-dozen pages on Emily Dickinson, for instance, there is no direct assertion that she was driven to a "terrible isolation" because the rise of the bourgeoisie and the spread of commercialism were repugnant to her. There is, indeed, a definite intimation that Mr. Josephson knows her tragedy was personal and unique. But he half-suppresses this knowledge, and implies, by including her among his "baffled lives," that she was, after all, "frustrated" and grieved by that materialistic environment.

Again, his comment on Howells is not unjust, as far as it goes. But how much more could be said about the man! To accuse him of having been timid and bewildered, afflicted with uncertainties, held in check by "manœuvers of compromise," is accurate but incomplete. For Howells had compensating qualities, and he wrote many things quite as fine as the "letter of beautiful indignation" he sent to the Governor of Illinois during the Haymarket riots. It is true that Howell's socialism was a pale, anemic emotion, and yet courage and sincerity were not wanting in a man who could write, at the time he did write, this passage:

> " . . . the author is, in the last analysis, merely a working man . . . I wish that I could make all my fellow-artists realize that economically they are the same as mechanics, farmers, day-laborers . . . Perhaps he (the artist) will never be at home anywhere in the world as long as there are masses whom he ought to consort with, and classes whom he cannot consort with . . . Perhaps the artist of the future will see in the flesh the accomplishment of that human equality of which the instinct has been divinely planted in the human soul."

Nor was Howells moved to espouse an unpopular cause only in behalf of the Chicago anarchists. Mr. O. W. Firkins reminds us that he was opposed to the American system of criminal justice, fought against capital punishment, "detested the Spanish War" and "deprecated the annexation of the Philippines." There is no excuse, of course, for his cowardice in regard to sex discussion, but Howells was the author of more than a series of novels.

I am devoting so much space to Howells because he was by no means

the failure portrayed by Mr. Josephson (as well as by other recent critics, such as C. Hartley Grattan). He was more important to the history of American literature than most of the aromatic ghosts who wander disconsolately through the pages of this book. A man who expressed the transition period from romanticism to realism, who paved the way for the muckrakers, who improved American taste in reading, who prepared the American public for Norris and Dreiser, deserves even today our respect, however critical. And so, Howells was not altogether a "failure," and we have gained because he "stayed" and did not run off to Europe like a number of his contemporaries. It is likely that many of his limitations resulted from unfortunate environmental pressures, but this fact has a significance quite different from that suggested by Mr. Josephson.

We might go on through the entire gallery of portraits merged into this composite *portrait of the artist as American* and find similar clouded truths, similar over-emphases of particular facts and under-emphases of supplementary facts. The discussion of Melville is perverse because it deals only with his ultimate social maladjustment and not also with his domestic troubles and the bitterness of his poverty. The sketch of Bierce neglects to suggest that his hatred of the world he lived in might have been *his* fault, and not the world's. The chapter on Hearn is too charitable to a talent so slight, so precious, so trivial.

But these are, after all, not the most fundamental criticisms which might be levelled against Mr. Josephson's book. There is some basis for his theme. There were such men as James and Adams and Whistler who could not love their country, could not live happily in it, could not find creative inspiration in a bourgeois industrial democracy. James and Whistler fled to Europe and renounced their birthplace; Adams "stayed," a little bitter, more than a little sad, disillusioned. These men formed a sort of a "lost generation," one less crude and more intelligent and articulate than Hemingway's, but related after a fashion. And the others, their contemporaries, were probably, in various ways and to greater or lesser degrees, affected by the crude, ugly materialistic community of the late nineteenth century. The problem is one of interpretation. What was the historic rôle of this generation? What did its maladjustment signify? What are the conclusions we might derive from its fate which would bear upon our own times?

Industrial expansion thrilled America long before the Civil War. Early in the century new territories were opened, business prospered, factories increased their output. With these economic phenomena came the American dogma of democratic opportunity and national optimism. On the higher levels this psychology of blissful hope was reflected in the essays of Emerson and the poetry of Walt Whitman. Van Wyck Brooks, in *America's Coming of Age,* neatly characterized the social rôles of both men when he said of Whitman that in ideas he was "just an old-fashioned Jacksonian Democrat," and of Emerson that "if the logical result of a thorough-going, self-reliant individualism in the world of the spirit is to become a saint, it is no less true that the logical result of a thorough-going, self-reliant individualism in the world of flesh is to become a millionaire."

Jacksonian democracy, with its petty-bourgeois individualism and its economy of simple *laissez-faire,* was

the perfect idealistic expression of that period in which American capitalism was hardly beyond the pioneering stage. But as an ideal it was anachronistic after the Civil War. The doubts which assailed Whitman, and which he partially revealed in his *Democratic Vistas,* were the doubts of a man who had lived too long. Whitman was then sensitive and intelligent enough to feel the inadequacy of his primitive faith in democracy, but too näive, perhaps too old, to realize precisely what was happening.

This later period was certainly one of transition. A new bourgeoisie was arising— with a new economic order. In this period the aristocratic individualists of New England, and elsewhere, were confronted with a society which had no use for their values. They were, intellectually and morally, failures, and they expressed their awareness of their maladjustment by flight or bitterness or some vague amorphous resentment.

But they were not really critics of the new order, for their criticisms consisted either of laments for a past which had never really existed or attacks upon the most superfiicial aspects of their hated environment. They did not come to grips with the organization of that environment; they could not very well have done so, since neither they nor their environment were historically prepared for such an alignment of forces. As a matter of fact, the social criticisms of James and Adams were absurd, for they would have been valid only if the development of American society could have been reversed and the processes of history halted. It was not until the advent of Howells, the middle-aged critic, that definitely progressive social comment appeared in American literature.

The maladjustment of the James-Adams-Whistler generation, then, signified the passing out of the old order and the birth of the new. More, it pointed to the need for new ethical and social ideals and new grounds for criticism. It showed that upper-class or aristocratic idealism was impotent in a modern bourgeois society. It showed that there was a cultural lag in this country and that, finally, the intellectual forces were about to pass out of their traditional channels.

Howells was symbolic. In himself, he expressed, almost completely, the whole transitionary period. In certain respects he stood for the new order; he was a progressive critic, he had intimations of class-consciousness, he yearned not for a return from modern to primitive capitalism but for a stage beyond. His limitations, his failures, his blindness to various fundamental social phenomena, were the result, as I said before, of environmental pressures. He compromised with his environment, when the only hope for him was revolt. Mr. Josephson, too, believes that Howell's limitations were the effects of compromise, and that he should have revolted. But the revolt slyly advocated by Mr. Josephson would have been reactionary; as well as being an insane attempt to defy historical law. That is the crucial point. Mr. Josephson is not altogether wrong in suggesting that the post-Civil War generation was "lost," but one cannot be quite so tolerant of his subsequent interpretation and his choice of direction.

For us the significant thing about the entire period, socially considered, is the tragedy of the artist in a bourgeois society. He cannot be a great artist and accept that society. He must either be its critic or ignore it,

and the latter choice is usually a form of suicide. There is no question of accepting a machine age or a mass age. Here again is the old story of accepting the universe—you had better do so. The question is one of control and form.

Of these elementary facts Mr. Josephson has a rather perverted awareness. His own sympathies are obviously with James and Adams—with the impotent aristocrats whose liberalism was actually reactionary. He is an individualist who believes in the timocratic ideal and professes a dilettante's aversion for the masses. A realistic view of the socio-economic situation is simply beyond his scope. The conclusion of his book is the clue to his mind.

He espouses Humanism. Its problem, he declares,

> "if it is not to remain always in the zone of academic debate, will be *the approach to power*. The salvation and the strength of artists, in whom we have seen a potential force for Humanism, lies in their ability, hereafter, to incorporate themselves within the actual *milieu* . . . The humanizing force of art may work best through example and symbol. . . . So that the artists may become centurions of Soap for a time, proconsuls of Hydro-electricity; they may improvise before the microphone, dance before the television box. A period of training, a phase of discipline, will elapse, and in the end the force of mind in them may again leaven this society which has known only material pre-occupations. The dispersed and scattered beauty of automobiles and spotless kitchens and cubic office-buildings will have been organized and given meaning through their understanding of the ensemble. A spiritual equilibrium will have been reached in which they will have been active factors."

In short, the salvation of the artist is what is troubling Mr. Josephson, not the salvation of human society. And the way out of the entire problem, to him, is artistic and spiritual. He implies a sort of militant bohemianism. We are to look to Paris for guidance. This is not explicit, but I heard Mr. Josephson, not long after his period of expatriation in Paris, expound these principles. And although I thought them interesting at that time, over a stein of beer, somehow they seem ghastly in cold print between the unemotional covers of a book.

BERNARD SMITH.

Treatise on the Gods. By H. L. Mencken. Alfred A. Knopf, New York. $3.00.

Those who remember Mencken's savage and denunciatory vigor of a decade ago will hardly recognize the existence of the author in this rather tame volume. Mencken shyly confesses that he wrote this "treatise" in a mood of "amiable scepticism." It is as easy to imagine Herr Mencken amiable as to picture an ox as cute.

Strangely enough, though religion, and Christianity in particular, are revealed for the superstitious and irrational by-products of the mind in panic that they are, the reader does not feel the impact of a genuine assault upon religion. Simply compare Nietzsche's *Anti-Christ* with this work of Mencken's if you would realize in all its keenness the difference between thinking thoughts and writing words. In the former work you are presented with a criticism of the Christian way of life so devastating and memorable that you carry through the years the turbulent echoes of the Nietzschean philosophy. You come away from Mencken's book appreciating the marvelous competence of his style, the laudable extent of his reading, the general enlightenment of the outlook. The Nietzschean impact is not there. If your temperament is already sceptical and atheistical, then

the book on its intellectual side can be of small importance to you.

I agree that if a million or so of America's intellectual hicks could find their way through the volume, they would emerge almost as educated as if they had read between 250 and 500 *Haldeman-Julius Blue Books*. It would also be worth while for the reader to ask himself wherein the deep difference lies between a study like Mencken's and an analysis like Freud's "The Future of an Illusion."

Mencken has the mind of a novelist turned historian who delights us with many curious bits of information and sprightly opinions, but somehow fails to communicate the determinist interplay of social forces and psychological pressures and economic backgrounds without a knowledge of which no human theme can be treated with sufficient profundity. Mencken is only at ease and at his best when he discusses personalities. Social forces are not very real to him.

No anthropologist or sociologist or economist or psychiatrist would have written a book in this vein. Which is another way of saying that no person trained in the social and psychological sciences can be content with Mencken's treatment of religion. Its point of view would have been much more appropriate in the age of Thomas Paine. And though our author pretends to dote on science, to defend its sacred presuppositions even against certain distinguished scientists themselves who dare to forget the eternal difference between the tough-minded objectivity of scientific method and the tender-minded subjectivity of religious revelation, the bald fact is that Mencken is a scientist in the same sense that the man who brings me my newspaper is a journalist.

It would be difficult to find in contemporary America any other writer of comparable talent who is temperamentally so averse from the statistical sobriety of scientific method, so neglectful in all his writings of cool objectivity, patient verification, analytic evidence, Science! It is, therefore, rather amusing to find him commenting (in the Bibliographical Note) on William James's *Varieties of Religious Experience* as follows:

> "It has gone through many editions, and is still widely read. The style of the author is very charming, but what he has to say seldom has much scientific importance."

If you can imagine a more apt and accurate characterization of Mencken's own work, I cannot. If Mencken means by science what scientists mean (not what book-reviewers have in mind), there isn't a trace of either the scientific attitude of mind or the scientific method in this charming work of his.

Mr. Mencken's mind is a study in melodrama. He still conceives of life as quaintly divided between an infinitesimal minority of gentlemen (sources of light) and an infinite anthropoid majority of boors (sources of darkness), the conflict being eternally recurrent between Light and Darkness. He visualizes a precious few as being congenitally made of just the right stuff to be able to appreciate what is best in culture, while the swinish multitude is doomed forevermore by a logic of predestination to eke out a miserable existence, fit only to be the pawns and dupes and slaves of their betters. Mencken is a Calvinist in social science. Mencken cannot be weaned away from this infantile prejudice because it has been his stock-in-trade for twenty years and has given him and many admiring followers a wonderfully exhilarated sense of superiority and uniqueness.

What I should invite the Sage of

Baltimore to experiment with, as a psychological exercise, is this: Let him write out a long list of the appetites and desires and yearnings and loyalties and specific beliefs of the masses he affects to despise, and then let him check off in a right-hand column as many of these characteristics as belong rightly in his own repertory; he will be astonished at the similarities and overlappings discoverable in both columns. Mencken is one of America's idols for the very good reason that Mencken himself shares so many of the capitalistic evaluations and the will-to-power reactions of the aspiring multitude. Mencken is a bourgeois to the finger-tips. Though he write about Jesus, his affinities are with the shrewd and the cunning and the successful: attributes of *homo sapiens* that characterize not the best, but the worst type, in civilization.

Mr. Mencken's loving reference to the civilized mind (which he modestly presumes to be speaking for) is quite a joke by now: there ain't no such animal; the Great War destroyed that lie. The cultural anthropologists have furnished us with enough evidence from the life of primitive groups to make it pretty clear that whatever we are fond of referring to as civilized is actually in practice among those whom we have been falsely taught to look down upon as uncivilized.

If civilization as we know it under Christian capitalistic auspices is ever to be really civilized (*i. e.*, humanized), it will have to undergo a drastic transformation in the direction of a cultural communism that is more akin humanly and psychologically to the simplicities and decencies and humilities of primitive life than to anything that is generally associated with our so-called civilized life.

Really, Mencken's conception of the civilized mind is merely the arrogant pose of a conceited college graduate who thinks that a knowledge of books is the only genuine knowledge, that the fine manners of gentlemen are more important than the desperate dreams of laborers. Horrible perversion of reality!

Mencken does not seem to have the remotest notion of history as representing the rise and fall of social classes, each one of which in its period of crisis and doubtful ascendancy being cartooned and despised by a panic-laden aristocracy that cannot imagine the continuance of life or the birth of new beauty under the auspices of any other class but its own. Why, we are now developing an actual Aristocracy of Labor!

That Mencken should go on thinking in such melodramatic and absolutist terms in one part of his brain when in the adjoining segment he writes passionately of his loyalty to evolution and the scientific view of reality and the tough-minded nature of things, is one of those paradoxes which make the mind of man the very human phenomenon it is.

Mr. Mencken seems to have no power of self-criticism; nor has he any respect for the law of contradiction; nor is he concerned with the determinisms and compulsions that motivate human behavior in a socially regimented world. Since the contradiction and irrationality of his life and thought dog his footsteps at every turn, no wonder he champions so incessantly and noisily the lone beauty of rationality!

The world that surounds us never knew such agony of frustration, such live misery of despair. Only yesterday dirty dark shadows of terror enclosed the living universe and the incredible torture of war made man a living corpse. And tomorrow war-clouds gather again and frighten hu-

manity out of its pathetic wits. Everywhere the dream is transmuted into a nightmare. The gayety of our age is the half-insane language of distraction of minds that are afraid of the dawn of another tomorrow when murder will once more leap hysterically at the throats of nations.

In the midst of a world in agony, in the throes of rebirth or mad *selbst-Mordt*, the Sage of Baltimore is fascinated by such problems as these (shades of scholasticism!):

> "The case is different when we come to certain other parts of the present text, notably the account of the appearance of an angel and of Jesus' bloody sweat in *Luke XXII*, 43-44, the *Pericope Adulterae*, or story of the woman taken in adultery, in *John VIII*, 1-11, the doxology at the end of Matthew's version of the Lord's Prayer, and the clear statement of Trinitarian dogma in *I John V*, 7-8. For these there is no authority whatever in the early manuscripts: they first appear relatively late and under very shady auspices. The essential words of the last-named —'For there are three that bear record in Heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost: *and these three are one*—are not found in any Greek manuscript of earlier date than the Fourteenth Century, and do not appear in Jerome's translation of the *New Testament* into Latin. They seem to have got into subsequent Latin translations in the Sixth Century or thereabout, though they may have originated earlier. Even orthodox Catholic scholars question them seriously, and so recently as 1897 the Congregation of the Holy Office at Rome was asked to decide formally whether they could be 'safely denied.' It answered no; but when, twenty-three years later, the eminent Catholic theologian, Heinrich Vogels of Bonn, printed a new critical edition of the *Greek Testament* he quietly relegated them to the margin. The doxology at the end of the Lord's Prayer in *Matthew VI*, 13, is equally dubious: it does not appear in any of the early manuscripts. So with the beautiful *Pericope Adulterae* and the passage about the bloody sweat in *Luke XXII*."

Bloody sweat. What irony! The bloody sweat of millions of toilers. The crucifixion of millions of children sweating their young lives away for the greater glory of Christian capitalism. The degrading exploitation of a system built on profiteering. The inner corruption and cruelty of a world manipulated by imperialists. The desperate realities of class struggle. The wrongdoing perpetrated by the gentlemen of the ruling classes. The sadistic insensitiveness of the aristocrats of culture . . . These are not the kinds of reality that Prof. Dr. Mencken is interested in. He must keep up the delusion and the pretence that he is a free-minded critic, an iconoclast, even a temperamental radical. He dare not probe the economic realities lest he reveal himself as the Bourbon and fundamental reactionary that he is.

Mencken fiddles while civilization burns.

SAMUEL D. SCHMALHAUSEN.

Three Strange Lovers. By V. F. Calverton. *Macaulay, New York.* 1930. $2.50.

Three studies in human passion; three stories of what used to be called abnormal psychology; three biograph-

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NOTE: I wonder whether Mr. Henry Louis Mencken could not be persuaded to submit to a psychoanalysis (by Dr. Ernest Jones of London). There are some baffling points in his recent behavior that deserve a Freudian clarification. I refer only to the most important: his deep emotional attachment to his mother; her recent death and its effect upon him as a devoted son; his sudden breaking of a twenty-year friendship with his boy-friend, George Jean; his writing of this "amiable" book on Christianity and religion; his kosher marriage—in a church!—at age fifty; his surprising preoccupation with death . . . To a psychoanalyst, go!

merely to determine the correct appellation, but to discover what Mr. Calverton was after, and to see in what respects he has succeeded in arousing in the minds of his readers the emotional and intellectual response he was seeking.

The Strange Lover, first of the *Three,* is a dramatic monologue, uttered by a man who had murdered his mistress because he loved her. In the eyes of the world and the law, he is demented, and judged by all our conventional standards he is certainly a maniac, but his story, related in the first person, reveals the perfect logic of all his acts, the sweet reasonableness which every one of us can build up around our strangest and most eccentric behavior. But once we attempt to rationalize such behavior to the satisfaction of "sane" people we are hopelessly lost. So, Mr. Calverton's Strange Lover thinks aloud, making no attempt to excuse or justify himself: his is—to himself—a single-minded idealist. His viewpoint, necessarily at variance with that of the society with which he had lived, is individualistic to such an extent that to him the murder of his mistress was a beautiful necessity. Why carry on until love became a disgusting habit? Is it not better by far to kill than to suffer the spiritual degradation that comes from surfeit?

The Return, which is the second study, is simple in the extreme: a man's mistress leaves him and returns to her husband. The situation is presented from the lover's point of view. She is gone. For good? Why? Will she return? The drama grows with sickening intensity, marked by the sound of a footfall, a voice in the distance, or nothing at all; and at the end she comes. A blinding flash of ecstasy. No; it was only her husband coming for the lady's fan.

Thy Will Be Done tells of a priest who tries to save the soul of an oversexed woman, and during the last confession succumbs to her charms. In a mad fury of passion and fear, he kills her.

Intrinsically, there is nothing very extraordinary in the persons concerned here or in the externals of their conduct. The "strangeness" of their respective passions is by no means unusual to anyone who is familiar with the writings of modern psychologists, or even with the stories and novels of Maupassant and Andreyev, to mention only two writers neither of whom can now be called new or advanced.

Mr. Calverton's originality lies, I think, in the application of his method of treatment. The result of his knowledge and craft I have already hinted at: one's uncertainty as to precisely what he has created. I find it impossible to say whether he has written stories, dramas, essays, or biography. This is as it should be, for I am puzzled, after a fashion, exactly as I am puzzled by the uncorrelated data of life itself. The material, for instance, that was printed in the tabloids in connection with the Snyder, Halls-Mills, and Kip-Rhinelander cases, offered some of the most remarkable examples of human passion I have ever seen recorded—words and acts such as, in refined form, have given Euripides and Dostoievsky their most striking scenes; but these scenes were invariably recognizable as "drama" and "fiction." There was, of course, a reality there, a sincerity, and consciousness that such things might happen; but because of the technical forms into which these writers had moulded their material, they could ical presentations of sex torture and exaltation; three—three what? It is worth while to ask the question, not

not escape the feeling that, after all, the conscious skill of the artist had been applied to the chaotic data of life.

Does Mr. Calverton's work go beyond that of Dostoievsky? Is it more convincing than Euripides? Not at all. But it is different. His idiom is more direct; it is far less the idiom of the conscious or inspired artist than of the deliberate scientist, and for this reason it convinces us of the actuality of what he describes. Possibly, even his "scientific" approach is only another artistic device, something that makes us forget that he is dealing with imaginary persons and imagined scenes. In which case, he is even more a genuine creator than I have called him.

With the soundness of his knowledge of psychology I have no quarrel, because I make no pretense to any extensive knowledge of the subject, but I am completely convinced of the essential truth that underlies all his characters, and that is enough.

Three Strange Lovers is one of the few recent books of fiction (let me use that word in its widest sense) that seem to have been written neither to entertain, nor to shock, nor to surprise—in a word—not for effect—but to reveal. It seems to me as though the writer has coldly, dispassionately, disinterestedly, gone into the human laboratory, chosen his cases, studied them, and offered them as reports to anyone who might care to read. Like the true scientist, he doesn't much care whither his investigations might lead him.

It would seem obvious that this is a reasonable viewpoint for every scientist, and even every artist, but if you think that most artists and scientists are influenced by such considerations, you have only to look at their work and their statements. Mr. Calverton's book is therefore something more important than just three intelligent and highly interesting studies; it is an artistic and technical landmark.

BARRETT H. CLARK.

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The Apes of the Gods. By Wyndham Lewis. The Arthur Press, London. 3 guineas.

Wyndham Lewis continues his slaughter of the "innocents." In his latest book he deserts the metaphysical thesis for the sledgehammer. He leaves the stage bloodier than ever Shakespeare did. His attack is thrown into the form of a novel. Such a novel never was. It is a royal quarto volume containing 625 pages, the price is three guineas (about sixteen dollars), and it requires a crane to lift it about. But it is full of meat and of blows that kill.

It is not an exposition of his metaphysics or, more precisely, philosophy. It is a film of types or material objects into which persons of sense may read their desire for a new philosophy of pure intellectualism such as is conceived of by pure intellectualists of the Lewis breed—a philosophy that shall breed a new Society composed of artists, and shall destroy the Augean stables, called an art world, produced by rich Bohemians—The Apes of the Gods.

To understand and appreciate this titanic novel, the reader should know something about Wyndham Lewis' philosophy. Those who read THE MODERN QUARTERLY will possess this knowledge, for not long ago I indicated the nature and value of the philosophy in that journal. The root of Lewis' philosophy is simple: It is the argument or assumption that only that society will survive which is founded upon pure intellect and art expression. It is the argument or as-

sumption that the supremacy and quality of the state depends upon its creative artists who must in consequence be real gods and not "geniuses" run by Apes of the Gods. To Lewis, our literary and art spheres are filled with apes who cannot distinguish between emotion and intellect. He insists that this is a positive cause and sign of social disorder and decay, "of every sort of vague and sloppy subjectivity." And he thinks this state of things must be altered, if the artist is to fulfill his function of revolutionizing society at a moment when it most needs it. The artist is, in fact, the potential world revolutionist held in check by the Apes.

In my aforementioned article I pointed out that there are two philosophies now struggling to dominate the world. One is the pure intellect (the Neo-Thomist) philosophy; the other is the pure intuition philosophy —the philosophy of the masses. It is the philosophy held by those who argue that that society will alone survive which builds its foundations with brain and brawn materials supplied by so-called inferior races, which are inferior only because they have never been allowed to assert their potential abilities and social values.

Turning to *The Apes of the Gods,* we may trace stages of the continuation of the work carried on by Lewis since 1914 or thereabout. In particular, that part of it contained in *The Art of Being Ruled* and *Time and the Western Man.* There is in the chapter called "The Encyclical" actually an encyclical letter, the concept of the true intellectual-æsthetic world, and the awareness of a class calculated to undermine such a world. There is the plan determined by this concept scattered about the book of a destructive structure. There is the site, Bloomsbury, Chelsea, Mayfair, determined by the plan. There are the materials for the doomed monkey-house, the unproductive apes, "the general rabble that collects under the equivocal banner of *Art.*" There are the builders, Dan Boleyn, a boy virgin of nineteen whom men and women conspire to rape; Horace Zagreus, who escorts him round the Lewisian Inferno—an enormous country house packed with the apes and their proteges—the insane, inane, rich pseudo-Bohemian, the mock intellectuals, the "irresponsible baby-boys and baby-girls," the sickening sexual perverts, the half-demented so-called Youth of England who are worshiped as geniuses, and whose silly works are idolized by their fellow-members of the cliques and gangs to which they belong. They are the posturing idiots who are bought up wholesale and exploited by the millionaire Press, who sprawl across the pages of the daily sheets and express ignorant views and opinions of advanced scientific thought which they do not understand; and their equally posturing supporters, the aristocrats, who form the "gossip-column" class and are fodder for the chat - champions and belle - gossips. Their views on cultural subjects are insolent and grossly stupid, yet owing to the prominence given to them by the gossip-column, they are accepted by the mass as "tips from the *stable.*"

There is the monkey-house structure and its annexes, through which Dan is dragged by Zagreus to undergo initiation into the truth of its shocking inhabitants who reflect the decay of English Society since the War. It is a mad-house filled with the sexually insane, morons, and mentally defective, which Lewis erects only to destroy. The sight of him destroying it is one of the most stimulating things in present-day literary

satire. His genuine hatred, his power of vituperation, his merciless analysis and destructive energy all serve to produce a picture of universal cultural rottenness that stinks to heaven.

One criticism that has been levelled against the book, to which Lewis replied at length in *Everyman*, a London weekly, is that this passionate indignation, this terrific slaughter of the worms, is simply a waste of time. Was this picture of the Bohemia that has changed radically since the War, peopled by morons and rich pseudo-Bohemians, worth composing? Lewis' reply is to the effect that insects may be as deadly destructive as dragons. The manner of the book is open to criticism. Occasionally, Lewis lapses into the very obscurity of some of his victims. Readers of the book should get a copy of THE MODERN QUARTERLY containing the symposium on *The Word*. They will find it instructive to compare some of the extracts quoted therein with some of the passages of the chapter on *The Virgin*.

HUNTLY CARTER.

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Voices of October: Art and Literature in Soviet Russia. By Joseph Freeman, Joshua Kunitz, and Louis Lozowick. Vanguard Press.

Someone who has been to Soviet Russia is doubtless in a better position to criticise this book than I am. But, as one of those who stay at home and listen eagerly to all the stories of travelers returning from that fascinating place, I can say that it ministers deeply to many of my special curiosities about what is going on there—better, perhaps, than if with my ignorance of the Russian language I went there myself. It tells me what is happening in people's minds and emotions, at least so far as literature, the cinema, the stage and the other arts can truly reveal and interpret these things.

Revolution appears to be for artists—and I am thinking particularly of writers—a test, an opportunity, and a puzzle. There were those who failed in the test and fled; their subsequent work (whatever the degree of their original talents) has had the characteristic emigre barrenness. This book deals with those who did not fail in that test. These (or at least all but the youngest of them) had belonged to a variety of pre-war "schools," all oriented to Paris as the modern center of artistic progress or fashion, whichever it was. But it mattered very little to which school an artist belonged. If he had a great deal of creative energy, and sincerely sought to interpret what was going on around him, he found an audience. Revolution was for these artists an immense opportunity.

But there remained—and still remains—the puzzle-picture aspect of Revolution.

The artist's (that is, the poet's, story-teller's, dramatist's) task at all times is to interpret in some emotionally intelligible form the bewildering chaos of life. There are, in settled times, standard and familiar patterns of artistic interpretations. These had already been disintegrating before the World War, and had for the intelligentzia been partly replaced by a defiant acceptance of the world as meaningless chaos—an artistic attitude which still today, outside of Russia, is the one most favored among the intelligentzia. The Joyce-Huxley-Jeffers pattern of patternlessness may well enable our writers to display their enterprise and courage in rejecting the smug conventional attributions of order, progress and beauty to a scene of decay. But it is obviously unsuited to the interpretation of the

bewildering disorder which in Russia has attended the creation of something new. There it does not take an artist to see the disorder—anyone can see it. The artist's task is to find meaning in that disorder—to perceive and interpret its emergent pattern.

Of course, there is the handy political explanation—the Communist interpretation of it all in terms of class struggle, dictatorship of the proletariat, and Socialist state-building. And, no doubt, some Communist officials have never been able to understand why all good story-tellers, poets and dramatists should not come to the aid of the Party by following this simple and exact formula of interpretation. Yet it was discovered that belief in this formula did not of itself make an interesting poet or story-teller or dramatist. It was, indeed, a stimulus to artistic creation—and some of the most vigorous things in the new Russian literature have come from its influences. It went far in the direction of providing new artistic patterns of a bold and emotionally stirring sort. But it required for its effective use real creative ardor and not merely the skill of the editorial writer. Soviet critics and officials and the rank and file have all insisted that the best Communist political views, if not really turned to artistic purposes, if left in their raw state, were tasteless and juiceless with respect to those emotional hungers of human beings to which the arts have always ministered.

To take one special aspect of the Russian scene—the one for which this book provides richly abundant illustration in its chapters on fiction, drama and the cinema—there is the break-up of the patriarchal family institution in Russia and the emergence of some new sexual order from the chaos of experimentation. Yes, but what *is* this new sexual order? For example, a peasant comes to the city and falls in love with the new type of girl worker he finds there. Nothing can emotionally reconcile him to the superstitious peasant wife he has left behind. Soviet law accepts and regularizes the new mating, holding him responsible for his share of the support of any children he has begotten or may beget. That is all the law can do. But meanwhile there is actually a broken family. To how much, if any, sympathy is the deserted peasant wife entitled? Not much, it would appear—and certainly not to the poisonous consolations of jealousy. Let her find some useful work—and she may even learn that her unhappiness is a necessary part of the emergence of a new and better kind of mating. So argued many social theorists. And the writers found creative stimulus in such arguments, even when they held back from them as something a little too smug and pretty for honest art. As for children left without any parents, the social theorists remote from the actual conditions held out to the artist a complacent ideology concerning the superiority of communal-institutional life to individual family life. But had the artist swallowed those views whole, he would have found that the field-workers, tutored by the death-rate, were reversing their theoretical position. Even the social theorists were adjuring the artists to see things for themselves, and tell the truth as they saw it, and thus help create those human standards of value upon which laws and their enforcement must be ultimately based.

Again, what was the artist to think about the sexual experimentation of young people—which in Russia as in America involves inevitably to some

extent abortions and the spread of venereal disease? Was this experimenting something to laugh at or to ignore in the presence of important economic problems? Was it something to be seriously alarmed about? Or was it, in despite of its uglier aspects, and because it was replacing an old system founded upon prostitution and the abandonment of illegitimate children, something to rejoice in? To these questions the political and social guides and philosophers of Soviet Russia have returned somewhat conflicting answers—just as they have in America. And the artist has had to depend upon his own sense of human values, in his interpretation of these aspects of current Russian life.

The occasional effort, indeed, of the writers to depend on outward authority has sometimes had awkward results. Thus Soviet Russia went through a phase in which for considerable numbers of people there was no opportunity for permanence of sexual relationships. It became in some quarters the fashion of current thought to idealize these desperate necessities of the time as a splendid goal: and certain works of fiction loyally reflected that tendency. These works of fiction glorified the importance of the tasks of organization and production, and deprecated as old-fashioned and sentimental the notion that the love relations between individuals were of any real significance. In the meantime, however, enough stabilization of social conditions has already occurred to change the fashions of current thought, which is now free to recognize the importance of permanent love relations to the Socialist State—and the fiction written to assert the contrary already seems doctrinaire and wooden, and even has a slightly counter-revolutionary odor!

The best imaginative artists have not fallen into this kind of false and futile "loyalty" to the passing phases of life in Soviet Russia; they have realized that they were not politicians, and that they had their own independent contribution to make to the new order in telling the truth about human nature as it manifests itself in adjusting or failing to adjust to new conditions. They have been willing to have their writings assume some burdens of education and even of propaganda, so long as it is education in civilized living and propaganda on behalf of courage, patience and wisdom—not education in the Marxian dialectic or propaganda on behalf of Party policies, however much they might believe in both.

To this artistic attitude the Party itself has been remarkably tolerant. It has declined to be led into giving official sanction to any group which undertook to interpret Communist attitudes or Party policies in art. It has even recognized that among the functions of art is the one which gives harmless relief to anti-social emotions; and it has tolerated and even encouraged certain politically harmless forms of literary and dramatic mockery of Communist aims and Party policies. It has been surprisingly sympathetic to criticism of its blunders and failings, so long as these do not take a partisan and political form. One gains, indeed, the impression that the censorship in Russia, in so far as it applies to works of imaginative art, is not so much a defense set up by the State against the danger of free expression by artists, as a defense set up by artists and critics (as a part of the government) against the fears and prejudices of politicians who do not understand the purposes of art; that is, the censorship appears to be both a means of reassuring the politicians and a bulwark for the writers

themselves, within which they are relieved of exorbitant demands for propaganda services and left free to be artists.

These, however, are all conclusions drawn by the reviewer at a distance. *Voices of October* seems to justify them with its wealth of intimate information about the arts in Soviet Russia. But more expert generalizations might have been drawn by the authors themselves—and I wish they had gone on to generalize after presenting their facts. It is the only complaint which I have to make against this book—it leaves me as a reader to sum things up in ways which may be less true than those they could have furnished me themselves.

FLOYD DELL.

The New Ground of Criticism. By V. F. Calverton. University of Washington Chapbook Series. 65c.

In his essay printed in the excellent series of *University of Washington Chap-books,* Mr. Calverton discusses with many-sided and penetrating brevity what criticism has been in the past and what it may be in the future.

Up to a hundred years ago, criticism, as Mr. Calverton sees it, was mainly a matter of æsthetic theory, expressing the standards and the ideals of an aristocracy of intelligence. The critic was largely preoccupied with matters of form and technique. There were rules for the dainty, the delicate, above all the conventional manipulation of words. The epic, the lyric, the drama, the essay, had each its established principles of structure, and any violation of these was sufficient to ensure critical damnation. Nor were matters much improved when a bourgeois democracy took hold of literature and art, as of everything else, and upon the conventional criteria of pure æsthetics superimposed its own even more conventional theories of morality. The perfect work of art must not only be critically finished in its form, it must teach a lesson of rewarded virtue such as the bourgeois loved to hold up before his daily meditations to atone for the lawless ravage of his nightly dreams.

The so-called scientific criticism did not advance things very greatly, for, with an elaborate parade of studying literary schools, of relating them to each other and tracing subtle processes of derivation and development, it was still all the time dealing with an artificial product, something created by a special class for a special class and, therefore, too far away from the realities of life.

Now, in Mr. Calverton's idea, the object of criticism, as of the art for which alone criticism exists, is to get into the closest possible touch with those realities, to grasp and portray and interpret the ever-developing relations which bind and link all the varied, interlocking elements and aspects of modern society. In Mr. Calverton's phase:

> "No work of art ever evolved without having the social life of the time written into it, or without having the individual psychology of its creator infused into its style as well as substance."

Therefore, the critic of the future must not only be equipped with the formulæ of æsthetic technique, he must study an artistic creation as it is related to its creator in all his subtle spiritual origins and affiliations. He must go further and view it as the product of its age, as expressing all the complicated sociological and economic movements and struggles which go to make up the life of the time:

"Is it not necessary, therefore, that a modern critic build first upon a social and economic background, if he is to understand the changes in art that are caused by social and economic life, and then, to complete his synthesis, turn to the psychological part of his problem?"

The danger of this point of view, a danger which Mr. Calverton recognizes, though he somewhat too lightly whiffs it away, is that "social art is not art but propaganda." The critic and much more the artist who is too well equipped with social and economic theories is apt, unconsciously, to treat truth of human nature as if it were secondary, to distort and disfigure the precious reality of life in the vain effort to make it give significance and stability to his fleeting theories. And the remedy for this ever-besetting peril is to strike out even more widely and deeply than Mr. Calverton does and to seek the fundamental unity he earnestly and admirably craves in just that precious reality of life which is the sure and lasting foundation of all art and all criticism that count. This is what Matthew Arnold meant when he called literature "a criticism of life." It is further what he meant when he called Goethe "the greatest poet of his own time and the greatest critic of all times." Goethe's formal critical writing is comparatively unimportant. But in profound insight into the abiding truths of human nature he has rarely been equaled. And what Goethe suggested and adumbrated was far more fully carried out by Sainte-Beuve. Sainte-Beuve cared little for æsthetic theories; indeed, in purely æsthetic discussion he is not at his best. Yet he insisted, perhaps not altogether wisely, that he was always a literary critic, and in his practice of it criticism was precisely what Mr. Calverton seeks and longs for, the intimate analysis of the human soul, in its profoundest psychological depths and also in its broadest sociological affiliations. In the forty volumes of his portrait-studies criticism, biography and history are woven together in a web as subtle in its artistic perfection as it is far-reaching in its spiritual implications. As he said of himself, "I botanize, I herborize, I am a naturalist of souls."

And of course this view of criticism does not in any way invalidate the contention of Mr. Calverton; for all that gives value and significance to æsthetics and politics and ethics and sociology alike is the sure and unfailing foundation of the human heart.

GAMALIEL BRADFORD.

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The Bridge. By Hart Crane. Horace Liveright. 1930.

Until the twentieth century, American poetry was chiefly an imitation of English verse. Emerson was the first to revolt against this convention, and influenced both Whitman and Emily Dickinson. From this rebellion sprang the Whitmanian tradition, which represents the only important native influence upon American verse. Poe was respnosible for the other divergence in our early poetical history. Although he was also affected by the English poets, Poe was instrumental in directing the course of French Symbolism, which later returned to America with Ezra Pound and T. S. Eliot.

These two outstanding—and antipodal—traditions in American verse merge in the poetry of Hart Crane. The distinction of Mr. Crane consists in the fusion within his own work of the spirit and temper embodied in the writings of Walt Whitman and the technical discipline and skill inherited and developed by T. S. Eliot.

Not only is Mr. Crane indebted to the same French poets as Mr. Eliot, but to the same English poets as well. From the robust Elizabethans, and especially from Marlowe, he has acquired a sonorous rhetoric and a distinctive blank verse. Donne, too, has left his impression upon Mr. Crane's idiom. At the same time, the latter has bound himself inseparably to indigenous American influences — to Melville, Whitman and Emily Dickinson.

Mr. Crane's first volume, *White Buildings,* received the extravagant praise of most of the critics of his generation. In these poems one can easily detect the accents of T. S. Eliot:

> I am not ready for repentance;
> Nor to match regrets,

the early effect of the Imagist poets:

> The apple on the bough is her desire,—
> Shining suspension, mimic of the sun,

and, indeed, all of the mature influences in Mr. Crane's work. Here one also encounters the spirit of Blake, the slightly disheveled but soaring imagery, the emotional intensity, the weighty vocabulary, which are trumpeted throughout Mr. Crane's second volume. However, despite the laudations of his contemporaries, the poems in *White Buildings* are clouded by an obscurity which—modern poetical theory notwithstanding—detracts considerably from their value as enduring literature.

In *The Bridge* this defect is removed by the use of a familiar subject matter that clarifies the meaning and metaphors of Mr. Crane's verse. This subject matter not only permits Mr. Crane to give full range to his intensely poetic imagery and resonant vocabulary, but lends to his work a significance entirely lacking in the fugitive and fragmentary pieces of *White Buildings.* Mr. Crane's attempt to concern himself with contemporaneity, to wrest from it something of meaning and purpose, places him in the current of a new tendency in recent American letters. This trend is displayed, in one fashion, in parts of Malcolm Cowley's *Blue Juniata,* and, in another and more vital manner, in the prose works of Michael Gold and John Dos Passos. These efforts to grapple with contemporary problems—and, in the case of Hart Crane at least, to find in them some quality of permanence—are promising signs of what could, with the proper direction, be developed into a dynamic American literature.

Although *The Bridge* is a collection of lyrics, the vision and feeling with which the volume is imbued give it the proportions of an epic work. The undisciplined talent of Mr. Crane has caught the essence of contemporary America—in the Brooklyn Bridge, in a New York harbor dawn, in a speeding train, in the flowing Mississippi, in an airplane crash, in a wop washerwoman, set in a background formed of the now legendary figures of Columbus, Pocahontas, Rip Van Winkle, Walt Whitman—and has embodied this essence in an enduring form.

ALAN CALMER.

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Not Without Laughter. By Langston Hughes. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.

Black Manhattan. By James Weldon Johnson. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.

Although one is a novel, and the other a factual social history, these two books complement each other. The novel, *Not Without Laughter,* records in rambling fashion the growth of a Negro boy, Sandy Rogers, from childhood to adolescence in

a Kansas town. It is unlike most of the Negro fiction of the past fifteen years in that it taps a field that lies far from the pavements of Harlem. In pattern it is similar to Julia Peterkin's *Black April*, the ablest modern plantation story that has appeared, either by white or colored writer. *Black April* was fashioned of episodes, so to swing the wheel of life on a plantation in the Sea Island country of the Carolinas through its 360 degrees. *Not Without Laughter* does the same thing for life in the Negro quarter of a small midwestern town; its chapter headings include *Work, Guitar, White Folks, Dance, Hard Winter*, etc. All possible phases in the life of a lower class Negro family are brought out: Aunt Hager, relic of slavery time and the Booker T. Washington era, is glimpsed bending over her washtubs or beating her wayward daughter; Jimboy Rogers, her son-in-law, is seen singing his lazy way through life; Harrietta, a daughter, is watched as she goes from adolescence to prostitution in the Bottoms and on up to the stage as a blues singer; Tempy, a second daughter, who is ashamed of her poverty-stricken antecedents, wanders now and again into the story with her dirty ways and her revulsion from "niggerish" qualities; and Anjee, the third daughter, manages to give all for love for the sake of Jimboy, but without getting much out of the deal. All this is glimpsed through the sane, sympathetic eyes of young Sandy. Mr. Hughes' treatment of Sandy is vaguely reminiscent of Sherwood Anderson's handling of his middle western kid, Tar Moorehead, but it is not quite as sensitive. Nevertheless, Mr. Hughes, in his story of Sandy, has written a first novel that must put him up with Claude McKay, Rudolph Fisher and the Walter White of *The Fire in the Flint*—among Negroes, in other words, who are transmuting the troubles of their race into good fiction. As might be expected from the author of *Fine Clothes to the Jew* and *The Weary Blues*, Mr. Hughes is especially good in the chapters that are not without laughter—such chapters as that describing the effect on the dancers of Benbow's Band. Laughter is often present in the book because Mr. Hughes's people have "got de blues, an' too dam' mean to cry."

Not Without Laughter complements Mr. Johnson's *Black Manhattan* because its locale is one of the necessary feeding sources for Harlem. At the end of the novel we find Sandy in Chicago with his mother, Angee. Harriett blows through town, billed in a Chicago theatre, but on her way to Broadway. Jimboy is in France fighting in the white man's war for democracy, a war that, in Harriett's opinion, is "not so hot." The development of Harlem, of course, was greatly augmented by the war, for hundreds of Negroes came North to fill jobs left open by labor shortage. It is a safe bet that the actual prototypes of Mr. Hughes's novel all drifted into Harlem after 1918. Jimboy would go there after the war because of the gaiety offered by the Negro's largest capital; Harriett would naturally live there, and perhaps sing there; and Sandy, in pursuit of an education, would naturally choose the most enlightened Negro section in the United States. Anjee, of course, would follow Jimboy.

Black Manhattan tells the story of how Harlem came into being to provide a haven for such as Jimboy and Sandy. Its great weakness is structural: Manhattan Island doesn't afford a suitable symbol of unity. For the work of Frederick Douglass, of

Booker T. Washington, of the Du-Bois of the Atlanta years, was not in New York, but in the battle ground of all America. New York, as a matter of fact, has been good to the Negro, comparatively speaking. In modern times there have been but two big riots that have jeopardized the Negro in our midst—the Draft Riots of the Civil War, and the San Juan Hill troubles of the turn of the century. What Mr. Johnson's book really amounts to is a very useful and very necessary history of the Negro in the theatre and as real estate operator and owner. I believe that DuBois, who is supposed to know all about his race, admitted upon reading *Black Manhattan* that Johnson had turned up all manner of material unknown to him. Mr. Johnson lived through most of the story he has to tell—that of the Negro's development from minstrel purveyor of entertainment to his solid achievements on the stage in the persons of Robeson and Gilpin and Florence Mills—and he tells it well. He had told some of it before in *The Autobiography of an ex-Colored Man,* which dealt with the growth of the Black Bohemia that flourished in the days of the Haymarket and the Tenderloin that was a Tenderloin. But in *Black Manhattan* he puts the full story into proper perspective. If he has dwelt more upon the Negro's achievements than upon the wrongs that are visited upon the race, no doubt he can be excused on the grounds that he meant to write a book about achievements. Among the most interesting of these achievements is that of Philip Payton's victory for the Negro real estate dealer and owner in Harlem.

Black Manhattan, because of its tenuous unity, suggests other books. George Schuyler ought to take a tip from it and write the story of the Negro's subjection to organized religion of the money-eating variety. Du-Bois or Johnson himself ought to write the story of the Negro in the United States.

JOHN CHAMBERLAIN.

✣✣✣

Armageddon. By Eugene Lohrke. Cape & Smith. $5.00.

As was to be expected, the anthologists are at work on literature of the World War.

The anthology under consideration is a compilation of excerpts from the war books of seventy authors, ranging from Maxim Gorky, John Dos Passos and Andreas Latzko to P. N. Krassnoff and Jaroslav Hasek.

Mr. Lohrke is "objective." That is, he chooses and arranges his material with a pretended indifference to their sociological and political significance.

Mr. Lohrke is "literary." That is to say, purely literary considerations have more weight with him than historical facts or descriptions of historical events. This leads him to omit John Reed's *Ten Days That Shook the World* and to include such discredited drivel as *From Double Eagle to Red Flag* by the anti-Semitic, White Guardist, Krassnoff. To complete the picture of Mr. Lohrke's disinterestedness it would be fair to note that he included the German *Hymn of Hate* as well as the Japanese Emperor's declaration of war on the German Empire, that the anthology contains Lenin's speech before the Petrograd Soviet on November 8th, 1917, as well as a quotation from an Allied official communique.

But this objectivity, this "fairness," is an old trick of the anthologist, despite which *Armageddon* never really comes to life. The lack of a definite political philosophy, either conservative or revolutionary, results in a

murkiness that leaves the reader confused as to the significance of the causes and major events of the war and bewildered in trying to piece together this hodge-podge of literary excerpts. Some of the chapter headings in Mr. Lohrke's book will give the reader an idea of what I mean. Here are a few: *The Birth of the French Soldier, Christmas Day, Five Souls, The Lady in Green, The Bright African Sun, The Storm Breaks, Strange Meeting, L'Envoi,* and so on.

In the choice of his material and in his introduction to the book, Mr. Lohrke admits that he is overwhelmed at the ferocity and *size* of the war. He says:

> "But the Great War had this to distinguish it from other conflicts in history—that it mobilized not only more men and material resources than any before it, but that it organized every possible current of thought and feeling as well."

Well, the World War was a big war, I think one can admit that with comparative safety. . . .

On the causes of the war Mr. Lohrke is strangely silent. In his introduction he makes no attempt to discuss it, and from his chosen material one would think that the war was an act of God. Speaking of the war that resulted in more than ten million dead and as many maimed, blinded and crippled, Mr. Lohrke says with pseudo-psychological profundity:

> "*Men wanted this,* this terrible release from the penalties of safety and monotony. The day had come when petty exactions of living could be swamped in the mighty ocean of self-surrender."

Of course, this is not Mr. Lohrke's idea. It was propounded during the war by George Bernard Shaw, H. G. Wells and the other "pacifists" who felt that a "psychological" explanation of the slaughter was necessary. Wells was a paid propagandist for the British intelligence department; one can understand his necessity for writing stuff of the nature, but why should Mr. Lohrke do so? Mr. Lohrke ignores the necessity of conscription to make men enjoy this release from the monotony of civilian life. And perhaps the revolts in the French, British, Australian and Belgian armies on the western front were attempts to speed the war up and make it more interesting? What about the revolts in the Austrian, German and Russian armies?

How can the individualist explain the World War? How can this vast explosion of perverted social forces be explained by the narrow concepts of such individualist explanation as "the shot at Sarajevo" or similar nonsense.

Today we are living through a phase of the World War that is organically as much a part of the European conflict as was the battle of Verdun, the Marne or the breaking of the Hindenburg Line. The same animosities exist with new ones added by the grace of the Treaty of Versailles, the League of Nations, Geneva, Locarno and all the other so-called peace pacts. The method of operation has changed; the causes are still there. Our intellectuals, who are forever charging radical thinkers and writers with oversimplification, are themselves very naïve on the question of war.

Mr. Lohrke feels that the war is over; the men are dead, maimed, forgotten. Peace is here; so one compiles an anthology, thus putting, so to speak, a literary seal on the whole unpleasant business. And one writes in one's introduction:

> "Already people begin to speak of the Great War as they used to speak of the earthquake at Messina. Soon they will speak of it as they speak of the war at Troy. And then it will be put on the Curriculum of

Required Courses, and they will speak of it no more."

It is all over, Mr. Lohrke believes, and he ends his introduction with the mellow notes of muted flutes. Sunrise after Storm. Beyond lie new vistas, and so on. He says:

" . . . the approach (to the anthology) could not be made other than in reverence, mindful that those who have spoken . . . have voiced some part of the testimony of millions forever silent; mindful, too, of the greatness of a tragedy beyond anything men have known or recorded before; beyond anything, perhaps, that they will ever see again."

It is unkind, perhaps, to bluntly quote cold statistics after such a beautifully written passage; but the fact nevertheless remains that the United States spent $600,000,000 on national defense last year, an increase of nearly 150 per cent. over 1912. The increase of armaments in all countries since 1918 has been stupendous. The world today is an armed camp. In Europe everyone knows that the next war may break out at any moment.

Perhaps when this war period through which we are passing is over, someone will write the great war novel; perhaps in twenty-five or fifty years from now a Tolstoi will write the epic of this gigantic struggle. Until then books portraying segments of the conflict will continue to appear.

The vigor and passion of recent war books cannot help having a tonic effect on contemporary literature. In this connection, I think of John Dos Passos, Latzko, Cummings, Remarque, Renn, Barbusse, Voigt, and others.

What a welcome relief these books are after the mild flatulence of the newer decadents.

CHARLES YALE HARRISON.

❖❖❖❖

Collected Works of V. I. Lenin. Volume IV (1 and 2): The Iskra Period. $6.00. *Vol. XVIII: The Imperialist War.* $3.50. *Vol. XX (1 and 2): The Revolution of 1917.* $6.00 *International Publishers.*

Aside from their historical value, the works of Lenin enable one to grasp the monumentality of their author. His uniqueness among revolutionary leaders becomes more and more evident as one peruses his writings, and one stops wondering at his comparative isolation and unpopularity with men of his craft. Was there ever a man who so uncannily combined prodigious erudition with common sense, theoretic keenness with alert practicality, terseness of speech and unadorned style with compelling magnetism, iron consistency with the pliability of a rapier? One recalls his stocky figure, during the critical stages of the Soviet Union, as he harangued his irreconcilable comrades with Goethe's lines as to the drabness of theory and the eternal green of "life's golden tree."

Such a leader could have no equals, let alone superiors and commanders. Hence his early clashes with Plekhanov, the pontifical father of Russian Marxians who conducted himself as an autocratic tsar in the midst of genuflecting emigres. Plekhanov sensed in young Lenin a brilliant force, and welcomed him into the fold as long as the "novitiate" seemed to share in the general adulation of Papa George. Lenin did admire the older man, and to the very end paid tribute to his brilliant mind and valuable contributions to Russian Marxism. But it did not take long for Lenin to discover symptoms of mental sclerosis in Plekhanov and in such other veterans as Axelrod. And Lenin, amiable and genial in daily intercourse, was merciless toward ideational flaws and offences. He had to

tell the truth, even to Plekhanov, an affront which the latter could not, and did not, stomach.

Both the *Iskra Period* and the *Imperialist War* volumes present mainly polemics against open enemies and dubious friends. Lenin has been all too often accused of querulous pugnacity and of revelling in the art of making enemies. He never denied his preference for differentiation to apparent unity. It was not merely for the pleasure of verbal battles that he fought, gloveless the Russian "legal Marxians" and "Economists" of the Struve and Kuskova ilk, or the Martov Menshevism, or Trotsky's efforts at riding two or three horses at the same time, or such deviations within the Bolshevik faction as Bogdanov's empiriomonism or Lunacharsky's godless religionism. In most of these, and numerous other, battles Lenin was victorious. He had the satisfaction to see in his lifetime the discomfiture and evaporation of the near-Marxian, near-revolutionary tendencies which he fought to extirpate from the movement, regarding them as more noxious than the open hostility of bourgeois opponents.

With the same intransigeancy Lenin sought "differentiation" during the World War. This war proved an acid test for international socialism, and brought to the surface those very frailties and cracks of it which Lenin had been engaged for years in exposing. His stand was fearfully clear: the issue of the war was pure imperialism, territorial greed, and the mission of the proletariat was to turn the imperialist war into civil war, against their exploiters. He found precious few allies who would side with him to the logical end. Hence his bitter arraignment not only of the "Social-Patriotism" of Kautsky-Plekhanov - Guesde - Mussolini-Vandervelde, but also of such semi-internationalists as Martov-Trotsky-MacDonald-Spargo, or such "an emotional Socialist without theoretical grounding" as Upton Sinclair. Incidentally, Lenin commends Sinclair's "anti-war 'Manifesto' " (written before the entrance of the United States into the war) as "a deeply correct warning against vulgarising Socialism."

Victor Chernov wrote of his bitter enemy: "Lenin could say of himself, 'I know not where I am going, but I am going there with determination.' " The two volumes of Lenin's articles and speeches from the outbreak of the revolution to the July days belie this statement. The remarkable thing about Lenin was not only his determination, a quality of which the parties of Chernov, Milyukov, and Martov were innocent, but above all the clarity of his vision. In old days he would have been known as a seer. He was not taken by surprise in 1917. It is almost uncanny to read Lenin's forecast of events, even to a Guchkov-Milyukov-Kerensky cabinet, and this—some six weeks before the March Revolution! Advised of the uprising while he was chafing in Switzerland, Lenin wasted no time on hallelujahs. Two days after the outbreak he wrote what seemed an offhand letter to Alexandra Kollontay, in which one finds a succinct outline of the Bolshevik platform as it was carried to victory in November. You have there the slogans of "Freedom, Peace, Bread," and "Conquest of Power by the Soviets," and you have an intransigeant divorce from the pseudo-"r-r-revolutionary" Socialists of the ilk of Chkheidze and Kautsky, let alone the bourgeois crowd of Milyukov and Company. One day later he drafts the famous Theses that became the catechism of the Bolsheviki in their strug-

gle for power. Then the desperate effort to get to Russia, despite the opposition of the Provisional Government, of England and France. And all the time, before and after his arrival at Petrograd (to become *his grad*), in April, a rapid fusillade of articles and letters in his inimitably pithy style. No hysteria, no high pitch. It is the calm voice of a commander who has anticipated the battle and has learned in detail the topography and the enemy psychology, and is now giving orders in conformity with the strategy and tactics worked out long ago. Opposition, calumny, enforced flight, isolation in his own party, ridicule and contempt —these are foreseen obstacles, welcome in their stimulation. On and on, with clear directions for attack and retreat, siege and storm, given with the tone of dead sureness in victory.

Much fun has been made of Lenin's phrase "professional revolutionists," suggested in his organization plan which split the party, in 1903, into Mensheviki and Bolsheviki. He was branded Jacobin and Blanquist and Bakunist and what not, for proposing to rob the revolutionary movement of its democratic, mass-character, and entrusting its management to a small, secret group of "professional revolutionists." It sounded as much a profanation as "professional prophets," or "professional Christians." Lenin was ever impatient with what he branded as "revolutionary cant." Whether the cause was holy and lofty and worthy mattered less to him than whether it was managed adequately. He, indeed, and those few men whom he evenly trusted, were "professional revolutionists" who regarded their activity not merely as an idealistic impulse but as an art, or a craft, which required skill and study and alertness and preparedness for all emergencies. That is why the Lenin group alone, in the midst of Russian eloquence, vacillation, chaos and anarchy, forged ahead during the months between March and November, gained an ever greater and wider following, and finally took over the tottering, captainless ship of state. What is more, they not only took over the state (any party with temerity and stamina could have done that), but destroyed anarchy and restored order—with blood and iron, to be sure. Lenin was never a pacifist, nor a democrat, nor a phrase-monger. Another of his early aphorisms, for which he had been piloried by his Socialist enemies, was: "Centralization of authority, decentralization of responsibility." It sounded harsh in the ears of the intelligentsia, who idealized the masses. Lenin had little faith in the intelligence or idealism of the rank and file, and therefore advocated centralized authority and professional revolutionists for the proper guidance of the masses. Once prepared and organized, the masses could be called upon to do their tremendous part, to share in the "decentralized responsibility."

Yes, Lenin knew where he was going, and he was going there with determination, Chernov's *mot* to the contrary. These two volumes show it plentifully, even though they reach only the July days—the most arduous months were still ahead. The direct, unadorned prose of Lenin has a rhythm of its own, and its sledge-hammer strokes make one think of Nietzsche (*e. g.*, the prose poem, *Firm Revolutionary Power*, pp. 47-48, v. II). While the Provisional Government was helplessly decreeing and counter-decreeing to a non-obeying nation, and while the multiple and varicolored parties were hoarsely theorizing and, Hamlet-like, hesitating and procrastinating "till the Con-

stituent Assembly," Lenin was definitely and clearly solving every problem of the state that was shortly to fall into his hands. The land, the factories, the banks, local and central administration, national minorities, foreign affairs, war and peace, coalition with other parties—these and other questions were dealt with by Lenin earnestly and surely. The other political leaders of the time spoke shamefacedly of taking over the power; they blushed and stepped on their own toes in the manner of rustic guests who want to be coaxed. Lenin openly declared that the Bolsheviki desired to take over the government, and his utterances had the note of a master who was certain of coming into his own and of staying there.

The volumes are excellently translated by Olgin, Kunitz, and Fineberg and admirably edited by Trachtenberg. The notes and appendices offer exceedingly valuable information on the Russian Revolution and revolutionists.

ALEXANDER KAUN.

❖❖❖❖

Soviet Rule in Russia. By Walter Russell Batsell. The Macmillan Company. $6.00.

This book has been written under the auspices of the Bureau of International Research of Harvard University and Radcliff College. It is a formidable volume of 857 closely printed pages. Besides the text, it contains numerous important documents, an excellent bibliography, a series of fine diagrams, a wealth of notes, and a very helpful index. In short, to all appearances, this is a serious study — solid, erudite, authentic.

The disappointment, therefore, is so much the keener when upon closer scrutiny one discerns under the veil of academic dignity and oracular wisdom, the disconcertingly dubious claims and impassioned assertions of the propagandist. Take, for instance, this morsel of empirical science: "A glance at Lenin," the author assures us, "should have been sufficient to suggest the ferocity and fixity of purpose of the Mongolian." What science, one wonders, is this—phrenology, anthropology, physiognomy? Or the next sentence: "The empire of the Tsars, however, was, on the surface, far removed from the twelfth century when the wild men from the region of Lake Baikal conquered Asia and subjugated Russia." This is sheer poetry. In his vehemence the author leaped back a little too far—a whole century. The Tartar invasion took place in 1223 and 1240—the thirteenth century! Moreover, before making unwarranted generalizations about the Mongolians, the author might have consulted the Russian historians on this point. "It should be said to the credit of the Tartars," says Professor Platonov, "that they did not interfere with the institutions of the Russians. Not only were they tolerant in religious matters, but they also exempted the clergy from taxation and other onerous obligations. They left it to the Russian Princes to settle their own political questions." It appears, then, that some of our modern "civilized" states may learn a thing or two from the "ferocious" and "wild" Mongolians.

But if it is too much to demand of the author an elementary knowledge of Russia's past, it is not too much to expect a thorough knowledge of his immediate subject. To our amazement, we find him in one place speaking of the Bolshevik Revolution as having occurred in March, 1917, and referring to Tereschenko as a Georgian. The slightest familiarity with recent history and with Russian names

would have obviated such errors. Again, despite his subtly deprecating suggestion that

> "Soviet legislation . . . was not only prepared by persons unfamiliar with legal terminology, but also was evidently drafted by persons to whom Russian was not a native tongue,"

we have good reasons to doubt his competence to discuss such matters. The frequently recurring grammatical errors in his own use of Russian phrases (seven gross errors in the first fourteen pages) tend somewhat to invalidate the authority of his linguistic judgments.

In dealing with the problem of nationalities, Mr. Batsell is hopelessly muddled. While in other chapters he takes great pains to prove the non-Russian origin of most of the Communist leaders—first Jews, then Georgians—in the chapter on nationalities he endeavors to convince us that the Communists "attempt to establish firmly the predominance of the Great Russian nationality." Why Trotsky or Stalin or Litvinov or Zinoviev or Mikoyan—all non-Russians—should have been vehement "exponents of Russian chauvinism" is more than we can understand from Mr. Batsell's presentation.

The book contains so much important and interesting material that it is a pity to see it marred by such fundamental blunders. The heaviest count against Mr. Batsell, however, is his vague, mystifying, constantly reiterated allusion to some force, unnamed, hidden, yet lurking everywhere, omniscient and omnipotent and infernally subversive. One is at a loss as to whom the author has in mind when he speaks of the "others more obscure but perhaps equally powerful" secret forces. One fails to understand why the author desists from "peering too far into the real origins" or to "estimate the influence" of these occult agencies. As the insidious suggestions keep on cropping up in the text, one cannot help attempting to decipher their veiled language. Is it the Catholic Church, the Theosophists, the Masons, the Christian Scientists, or the Elders of Zion that Mr. Batsell has reference to? If it is any one of these, why not come out with it? Why not present the evidence and discuss it in a scientific manner, instead of leaving it to the febrile imagination of the awe-stricken reader?

JOSHUA KUNITZ.

❖❖❖❖❖

Twelve Against the Gods. By William Bolitho. Simon & Schuster. $4.00.

Mr. Bolitho, "the incomparable Bolitho," pretends to give, in these twelve studies, "the story of adventure." Bolitho's "adventure" is the personality of whom he considers the exceptional adventurer. It is a rather pathetic social antagonist he trumps up in the epitomes of the lives of antique and modern sorts: Alexander, Casanova, Columbus, Mahomet, Cagliostro, Charles XII of Sweden, Catiline, the two Napoleons—I and III—Lola Montez, Isadora Duncan and Woodrow Wilson. Bolitho tries to appear above the enchantment of distance, but it is nevertheless true that his studies of the recently dead, Isadora and Wilson, alone approach evaluations. Bolitho does not reveal anew the olden dead. They are, in his hands, forever dead. In his concern with Casanova, who at most may be sentimentally classified as an angel with singed wings, Bolitho does not remember to evaluate Casanova the quasi-scientist or to elucidate Casanova the amoralist. The interest in the mountebank as man of glory or vainglory is a pathetic foible of mankind, nostalgic mankind. The pre-

tender to philosophic interest should be superior to the inflation of the half-fast devil.

Inflation completely characterizes Bolitho's attitude and manner. He inflates those he terms adventurers, while casually admitting that we are all of us adventurers—itself a platitude; he inflates his diction, and it is his diction which will betray the idolatrous into a cult of Bolitho. The cult is an inflation. It may be tossed into the conglomerate idolatries exemplified by that of Count Keyserling, whom Bolitho quotes in the introduction. Bolitho is less incomparable than typical: the newspaper word-monger, who, in America, when he is polysyllabic and apparently learned (meaning widely if not well-read), bombastic and positive in tone, becomes the literary artist, the philosopher, the "discovery."

I have said that Bolitho gets closer to the authentic as his subjects get closer, in time, to him. He shows a commendable sympathy for Duncan and Wilson, but it is finally a sympathy which obscures the fundamental poverty of these two, their small-beer adventures. His canonization of Wilson as a sort of Tamburlaine who dared heaven and was, for the time being, submerged, is another inflation: of his enthusiasm for the man whom he had seen and been enamoured of, at first sight. I, too, saw Wilson, but I fear not "plain." At seventeen, I saw him in the "preparedness" parade in Washington, marching afoot, the true democrat. I, too, was enamoured of him, but that infatuation was conditioned by the time and my age and my wish to be enamoured. Bolitho condones Wilson's egotism as a small vice, but how does he rate the proportions and the expressions of that egotism? The adventurer, Bolitho's adventurer, is, in the final analysis, the unbeautiful self-centered. The political ambition is fostered by egotism, and Bolitho impresses upon the reader how insistent was Wilson's political ambition, strange career for a scholar in America. A reading of the late President's addresses is a sad experience for a Wilsonian if he be critical of structure and content. They are typically vacuous, if more sonorous, in the true art of political oratory, American variation. They are loophole writing, loophole thinking, intended as such. Perhaps Bolitho will find a justification in some juvenile Machiavellian or Nietzschean mouthful. But he will not avoid the fact that the defeat of Wilson at Versailles was a defeat of Wilson, the egotist who forgot his politics, not of an idea or an adventure. The full story of Wilson, "the representative man," waits to be written. It will not be written by a Bolitho, who confounds his subjects with his own self-esteem.

The Isadora chapter is not, though Harry Hansen swear it is, an original thesis. Michael Gold in *The New Masses* has anticipated Bolitho's digression upon the love-life of that other "incomparable," and I have dwelt upon the fallacy in her so-called Greek dance in an article written before her death and published in *The Billboard*. Bolitho's total disparagement of Yessenin is evidence that the author is not so critical as he would appear. Isadora's friends, like the Belgian author, Franz Hellens, may forgive the dancer her abuse of Yessenin. Bolitho may see in the Russian poet the versifying pig. But the more astute will prefer a Gorki or a Trotzky upon the affair or the artist, respectively. Bolitho might have developed his thesis of the absolute purity of Isadora's love-life by indicating her preference for celebrities. There was

something of the ulterior in Isadora's affections. She sought out Rodin, the famous, not Maillol, the truly great, whose virginal "Greek" monuments should have been preferable to her, were she more discerning than ordinary. She sought out Gordon Craig, the talked-of, not Adolphe Appia, the more profound. She claimed Yessenin because he was "the hope of Russian poetry" and because she refused "to be her age": how usual, prosaic and unadventurous a rejection. Fate as death dealt her well and timely.

To my objections Mr. Bolitho would probably answer with an accusation of my unadventurousness, or that, in me the respectable predominates over the adventurous. That is the burden of his introduction. But the validity of his entire thesis of adventure is more than questionable. His work is sententious buncombe decorated by phrases that sound grand but are merely grandiose. His attitude is expressed as literature in such writing as this (from his study of Charles XII): "For unless you are going to grant patent rights in such a useful term exclusively to the cosmogony you personally fancy . . . " I am not asking the reader to enter into the reference of the quotation, but to regard its pretense as writing: therein is contained the man, William Bolitho. His moments of shrewdness are discovered as those instances of shrewdness which are pedestrian, quotidienal . . . and unsustained.

HARRY ALAN POTAMKIN.

❖❖❖

Black Genesis. By Samuel Gaillard Stoney and Gertrude Mathews Shelby. The Macmillan Company, New York. $5.00.

This is a collection of mildly amusing and somewhat ingenious Caucasianized folk stories of black peasants embodying some shrewd observation and told in the dialect of the Gullah Negroes of the South Carolina coast. It is rather boresome to an adult mind, but doubtless amusing to children and that great body of white folk who grow enthusiastic over any story or play giving the impression that the Negro is a simple child of nature unhappily sojourning in the midst of "white" civilization.

One rather grows weary of white people constantly availing themselves of black peasant dialect to write stuff that would not be able to get across in intelligible English. Why not, for a change, go into the hills and bushes of the South amongst the large population of whites who are living intellectually in the 16th century and study their dialects with a view to writing a White Genesis in that medium?

Those whites who attempt to write about Negroes or glimpse life through the eyes of black folk, can see nothing but tearful tragedy or low comedy. Glance back over the books and plays of the last decade dealing with the colored brother and you see how true this is. Beginning with Eugene O'Neill's defeatist viewpoint and proceeding through the books of Stribling, Van Vechten, Paul Green, Irvin S. Cobb, Hugh Wiley, Octavus Roy Cohen, Julia Peterkin, Roark Bradford, Dubose Heyward and many others to the authors of this volume, the story is practically the same. All of it is class literature, consciously or unconsciously giving aid and comfort to the idea of race difference and Negro inferiority, and thus justifying the treatment of the Negro citizen as a child.

Always there is a great straining to show that the Negro is "closer to earth" than anybody else, more "elemental" than other people, and that even when he appears to be civilized,

it is only necessary to beat a tom-tom or wave a rabbit's foot and he is ready to strip off his Hart, Shaffner & Marx suit, grab a spear and ride off wild-eyed on the back of a crocodile. For example, the authors of this book in their lengthy introduction labor and sweat at great length to prove that the Gullah dialect used therein is straight from Africa via the West Indies and point out about twenty words to support the claim. We are informed that *just* may be pronounced by these Gullah Negroes "*Jes'*, or *jis'*, or *jus'*; *little* is *li'l*, or, more emphatically, *leetle*." All of which is just as true of the dialect of rural Rhode Islanders or residents of Hell's Kitchen.

> "What happens with *all Negro* speech," they say, "seems peculiarly easy in this dialect. In emotion, the quality of rhythm increases and the spoken word is intoned; then as the feeling intensifies, it may at last be sung, so that a spiritual may grow spontaneously from the pulsing of a repeated phrase. This was one of the things that the African tongue did to English speech . . . "
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> "Tales," they continue, "have gone wherever the Negro has, with but few changes in plot or circumstance, but with amusing variations in casting. *African fashion*, their *dramatis personae* are practically all animals, behaving largely as men, but still keeping certain real or imagined characteristics of their proper natures."

In so far as this applies exclusively to Negroes it is all nonsense. How can people speak in this general way of black folk inhabiting a continent of eleven million square miles, where there is every type of environment and every stage of civilization from Egypt to the Congo pigmy settlements! The fact is that "the quality of rhythm increases and the spoken word is intoned" during emotion among all people without exception. Again, all folk, whether white, black, green or grey, who live close to nature whether on the farm or in the jungle have folk tales in which animals talk and occasionally act as human beings. What of La Fontaine's fables? And the Japanese fables?

It would be an excellent thing if Southern intellectuals would cease hunting for amusing and peculiar dialects and traits among hedge Negroes and palming them off as racial characteristics and heritages from Africa, and lend their pens and voices to the creating of a decent, just and equitable social order below the Rope and Faggot line. If they must use dialect, why can they not use it as a medium of protest against the *social evils* existing in that backward region as does Dr. E. C. L. Adams, of Columbia, S. C.? If they love these black folk as much as they claim, why not use their talents to emancipate them from ignorance, disease, exploitation and oppression?

GEORGE S. SCHUYLER.